

# WILLIAM ELLIS SCHOOL



## MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY held at the school on Thursday 14 October 2021

### MINUTES

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GOVERNORS		Present
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Izzy Jones (IJO)	✓
<b>Co-opted</b>	Mr Jonny Woolf (JWO)	x
	Ms Imogen Sharp (ISH)	✓
<b>Foundation</b>	Mr Richard Ault (RAU)	✓
	Ms Ronke Coote (RCO)	✓
	Dame Karen Dunnell (KDU)	x
	Dr Lee Elliot-Major (LEM)	x
	Prof Daniel Monk (DMO) <b>Vice chair</b>	✓
	Mr Daniel Needleman (DNE)	✓
	Mrs Nicola Sinclair (NSI)	✓
	Ms Selina Skipwith (SSK) <b>Chair</b>	✓
	VACANCY	N/A
<b>Local authority</b>	Mr Hanad Mohamed (HMO)	✓
<b>Parent</b>	Ms Sophie Jenkins (SJE)	✓
	Mr Stuart Taylor (STA)	✓
<b>Staff</b>	Mr Rob Yurchesyn (RYU)	✓
<b>ATTENDING</b>	Ms Katie Donkor (KDO) <b>Observer</b>	
	Mr Bernard Lane (BLA) <b>Deputy head</b>	
	Mr Mike Hutchinson (MHU) <b>Clerk</b>	

### 1. Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

SSK welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly KDO, who is chair of governors at Lilian Baylis Technology School. She was to observe the meeting, which began at 5.10pm. Apologies were received from, and permission for absence granted to, KDU, LEM and JWO. DNE apologised for leaving the meeting temporarily. No other apologies were necessary, as all other governors were, or would be, present, and thus a quorum. 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. Receive chair's report**

**2.1 Admissions Policy** SSK informed governors that, under chair's action, she had approved an amendment to the school's Admissions Policy to prioritise children who had been looked after overseas. Governors **AGREED** her action.

**2.2 Camden standards meeting** A standards meeting SSK and IJO had attended with Camden Learning chief executive Jon Abbey and the school's Camden professional partner Rob Robson (RRO) had been highly successful. The Camden duo had noted a new energy in the staff, students and governors.

## **3. Receive headteacher's report**

**3.1** SSK thanked IJO for her report and asked her to introduce it, which she did as follows. She explained that much of her brief report had been discussed at an earlier (16 September 2021) School Improvement Committee meeting.

**3.2 Y11 and Y13 outcomes** IJO highlighted KS4 and KS5 attainment and progress outcomes, as determined by teacher-assessed grades (TAGs). It was significant that, for the first time in her experience, no aspect fell significantly below the expectations of the education research organisation FFT. This was largely due to the achievements of the English department, for which she thanked RYU.

**3.3 School standards meetings** Senior leaders had led their own standards meetings about Y11 prospects with more than half of heads of subject, discussing interventions planning, curriculum amendments, and potential specification adjustments for summer 2022 exams. Reducing curriculum content following Covid-19 was particularly problematic for content-heavy subjects such as English and history. Preparing Y11 students for exams when they had missed out on GCSEs was problematic. Assessments had taken place this week. Y13 would be assessed shortly.

**3.4 School Development Plan** This would be discussed as the next agenda item.

**3.5 Student numbers** The October census had shown 22 vacancies in Years 7-11, in line with or better than most other Camden secondary schools. That said, secondary pupil numbers were set to fall throughout the borough in future years.

**3.5.1** William Ellis had been cited as first choice by 133 would-be Y7 pupils this year, compared to 93 in 2020. In all, 700 children had applied.

**3.5.2** There were 156 Y12 students on the school's roll. Increases generally had put some pressure on class sizes across the LaSWAP sixth form consortium. It was difficult to assess whether this was a result of Covid-19 or a developing pattern.

**3.6 Staffing update** Of five new teachers joining the school in September 2021, four were in the Early Careers or Teach First programmes. The two-year Early Careers framework replaced the single-year Newly Qualified Teacher programme.

**[HMO joined the meeting with apologies at 5.20pm.]**

**3.7 Safeguarding** IJO highlighted updates to the Department for Education's *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)*, with its new emphasis on sexual abuse and harassment. This emphasis raised the question of how a single-sex school (at least in Years 7-11) addressed the issues identified, given a standard male/female perpetrator/victim model. A statement and plan were in preparation.

**3.7.1** She urged governors to confirm on the dedicated school governance website GovernorHub that they had read *KCSiE*. In the event of an Ofsted inspection, failure to do this could constitute an existential threat. SSK to nudge errant governors to comply and MHU to remind how it is done.

**ACTION** **Item 3.7.1** **SSK** to remind governors confirm that they have read *KCSiE* on GovernorHub; **MHU** to remind them how to do so, and how to update their business and other interests.

**3.8** SSK thanked IJO for her summary and called for questions, which IJO answered as follows.

**3.9 At what point could new Y7 pupils be asked why they had chosen William Ellis [NSI]?** The previous week's (7 October 2021) Personnel and Resources Committee had in fact approved a proposal to hire a marketing firm to survey those children who had not chosen William Ellis. This information was likely to be more revealing.

**3.10 How much was William Ellis's improved recruitment drawing on other schools' potential pupils [NSI]?** One school was not a competitor with William Ellis; another competed weakly. Her aim in sharing this good news had not been to highlight William Ellis's success, but to paint the bigger pic. Infrastructure development such as HS2 could explain other school's difficulties in recruiting.

**3.11** DMO reported excellent feedback on the school's open days, including from parents who had changed their minds as a result of a school event and were now sending their son to William Ellis. They had praised the school's friendliness and stress on pastoral care. STA agreed: only William Ellis had demonstrated an amended curriculum to cater for developmental differences for boys compared to girls.

**3.12 Is there a waiting list in order to replace students who are lost in-year [RYU]?** Yes. There was often churn.

**3.13** SSK noted that Camden had alerted schools to expect an influx of the children of refugees from Afghanistan following the takeover of the country by the Taliban. This would be a managed process, although funding was still unclear, given that any children would now join schools after the 7 October 2021 census, which determined *per capita* funding.

**3.14** IJO thought that refugee families currently in Camden may be housed elsewhere in the country. If that were the case, it could be too disruptive to allocate them temporarily to Camden schools.

#### **4. Receive latest iteration of School Development Plan**

**4.1** IJO noted that this iteration of the constantly-updated School Development Plan had been reviewed by the recent (16 September 2021) School Improvement Committee meeting, so would be familiar to a number of governors. It was a three-year post-Covid strategy for rebuilding, recovery and renewal, with key performance indicators (KPIs) and individual departmental action plans.

**4.2** BLA took over the narrative. Priorities had been updated following publication of the new Ofsted framework and a series of departmental reviews in five key areas.

**4.3** He outlined these. First, Ofsted's driver was now curriculum, which the school welcomed. One of the few benefits of the lockdowns had been the necessity to think and act in novel ways. Curriculum change was a real focus.

**4.4** The second and third areas were science development and the "corners of the curriculum", such as EBacc subjects. The fourth area was strengthening diversity in key subjects. The fifth was developing outdoor education.

**4.5** BLA tabled a short (three A4 page) paper outlining whole school targets and how they would be monitored; a calendar for departmental development plans and review; and a teacher development programme, with appraisals and targets.

**4.6** The aim this year was to develop more consistency in departmental reviews in order to develop subject leaders' expertise and identify any need for extra support. Aspects up for review included curriculum design, and quality of teaching and assessment. The review cycle, which started with drama and modern foreign languages (MFL), would be annual. Standards meetings were part of the process.

**4.7** Any review could be a challenge but staff were generally positive about them.

**4.8** SSK thanked IJO and BLA for their remarks and called for questions, which IJO and BLA answered. SSK asked the first.

**4.9 Are EBacc subjects still favoured by the DfE [SSK]?** Pressure was still there, although measuring the numbers of EBacc subjects taken appeared less significant.

**4.10 Where is IT in the calendar of departmental reviews [SJE]?** It came under computing, which itself came under the maths department.

**4.11 Which KPI focuses on careers [DMO]?** Under leadership and management, a KPI focused on work experience.

**4.12 Are careers featured in the review calendar [DMO]?** Yes, careers education, advice, information and guidance (CEIAG) was reviewed in the summer term.

**4.13 Is the timetable for reviews negotiable [RYU]?** Senior leaders wished the process to be helpful and supportive. Reviews tended to be earlier in the school year to identify any departmental problems early on. The previous monitoring, evaluation and review cycle had been much heavier and more intense. This system distributed the pressure. If seriously problematic, dates could move.

**4.14 Why are global citizenship and the democratic society not addressed [RYU]?**

Ofsted's key focus was on the core curriculum, so that was the focus of review. That said, there were points where the issues could be addressed. Interests always competed. A discrete citizenship curriculum would have to replace something else.

**4.15 Could the school not embrace the UN's global citizenship education model and apply for Unicef's Rights Respecting Schools Award, while decolonising the curriculum [STA]?**

Post-Covid, sophisticated and detailed work on this was possible. It was about prioritising people, time and resources. Assemblies, tutorials and visiting speakers did much. Training for the Rights Respecting Schools Award had been disrupted by the pandemic, but applying for it remained an ambition.

**[DNE left the meeting at 5.56pm.]**

**4.16 How could equalities issues be integrated into the curriculum and monitored**

**[HMO]?** History would be most affected here. Some subjects would demand little if any amendment. Assessment would be informal, rather than part of departmental reviews. That said, the English review had shown that staff had thought deeply about fundamental questions. Delivery was important. A good curriculum on paper had to be well taught to be effective. All these issues were under discussion.

## 5. Receive reports from committees

**5.1 School Improvement Committee** SJE, who chairs this committee, reported that it had met on 16 September 2021. Draft minutes had been circulated. A very positive meeting had reviewed KS5 and KS4 results and plans; been briefed on Satchel, the exciting new homework software which had replaced planners; and discussed the literacy action plan.

**5.2 Personnel and Resources Committee** KDU and JWO – chair and vice chair of this committee respectively – having given apologies, IJO reported that it had met on 7 October 2021. Draft minutes were not yet available. The three substantive items had been safeguarding, marketing the school, and budget monitoring, including higher future energy costs. Last year's £200k carry-forward should remain intact.

*Governors' items*

## 6. Elect chair and vice chair

**6.1 Elect chair** MHU took the chair for this item and reported that, in response to an earlier request for nominations for FGB chair, RAU and SJE had nominated SSK. NSI seconded their nomination. MHU asked for any further nominations; there were none. SSK having indicated that she was willing to stand, MHU declared her re-appointed as chair.

**6.2 Elect vice chair** RAU and SJE had nominated DMO as vice chair; ISH seconded this nomination. There being no other nominations, and DMO having indicated that he was willing to stand, SSK declared him appointed as vice chair.

## 7. Appoint members and chairs of committees and agreed terms of reference

**7.1** SSK proposed that committee membership and chairs of committees remain as previously, except where varied as follows. Governors **AGREED**.

**7.2** They also **AGREED** the committees' terms of reference, as reviewed by the School Improvement Committee on 16 September 2021 and the Staffing and Resources Committee on 7 October 2021.

**7.3** DMO and NSI to join School Improvement Committee. HMO to join Personnel and Resources Committee. SJE and KDU to remain on both committees.

**7.4** NSI asked whether hybrid committees – in person, but with governors joining by video conference – were possible. SSK to discuss with KDU, SJE and IJO.

**ACTION** *Item 7.4* **KDU, SJE, IJO and SSK** to discuss potential for hybrid governor meetings.

**7.5 Pay** The Pay Committee to consist of RAU, KDU and JWO, and to next meet on Wednesday 3 November 2021 at 4pm.

**7.6 Headteacher's Performance Review Panel** This panel to consist of KDU, SJE and SSK, advised by Camden professional partner RRO.

**7.7 Admissions Committee** This committee to consist of SSK and DMO.

## 8. Appoint link governors

8.1 SSK proposed, and governors **AGREED**, the following link governors:

- SEND – Nicola Sinclair
- Safeguarding – Ronke Coote
- Attendance – Imogen Sharp
- LaSWAP – Selina Skipwith and Hanad Mohamed
- Equalities and wellbeing – Stuart Taylor
- Curriculum development – Karen Dunnell
- Pupil Premium – Sophie Jenkins
- Outdoor learning/The Mill – Richard Ault
- Remote teaching and learning, and literacy – Daniel Needleman
- Careers – Daniel Monk
- Health and safety – Richard Ault.

8.2 Link governors to meet termly with appropriate senior leaders and report back to appropriate committee. SSK to remind governors of their senior leadership links.

**ACTION** *Item 8.2* **SSK** to remind governors of their senior leadership links.

## 9. Review key governance documents

9.1 **Instrument of Government** Governors **AGREED** the Instrument of Government which came into effect on 1 December 2017 as fit for continued purpose.

9.2 **Notice of disqualifications** Governors, having reviewed this list, confirmed that none was disqualified from holding office. Absent governors to inform SSK if they consider that they may be disqualified from holding office as a governor.

**ACTION** *Item 9.2* **KDU, LEM and JWO** to inform SSK if they consider that they may be disqualified from holding office as a governor.

9.3 **FGB Standing Orders** Governors **AGREED** the FGB standing orders as circulated, including appendix on meeting remotely.

9.4 **Governors' Code of Conduct** Governors **AGREED** collectively and individually to abide by the Code of Conduct as circulated. KIS to sign on governors' behalf after the meeting.

9.5 **Governors' annual declarations** MHU reminded governors to declare on GovernorHub any up-to-date business and other relevant interests, and that they had read KCSiE. He had already committed to reminding them how to do so.

9.6 **FGB work plan 2021-22** Governors **AGREED** the FGB and committee work plan for 2021-22.

**9.7 Governors' dates 2021-22** Governors noted this document. SSK informed governors that the School Improvement Committee meeting scheduled for Thursday 18 November 2021 at 5pm would be turned over to a training session on trauma-informed practice, led by Camden's senior safeguarding adviser Martin Cresswell, Camden lawyer Rita Biddulph, and RRO. All governors were invited to attend.

**ACTION Item 9.7** *All governors to consider attending School Improvement Committee meeting on Thursday 18 November 2021 for Camden training in trauma-informed practice.*

**9.8 Governor attendance report 2020-21** Governors noted this document.

**9.9 Governor training report 2020-21** Governors noted this document. In answer to a question from DMO, SSK thought that Ofsted had no minimum expectations of training undertaken, though training in safeguarding (for all governors) and safer recruitment (for at least one governor on a recruitment panels) was non-negotiable.

## 10. Agree governor protocols

**10.1 Naming in minutes** Governors **AGREED** that they should be named in minutes as a matter of course, with the right for their name to be redacted on request.

**10.2 Approving policies** Governors **AGREED** that, on the principle of subsidiarity, all policies should be approved at committee if possible, or by an individual governor or IJO if guidance permitted and the committee wished.

## 11. Discuss governor recruitment strategy

**11.1** SSK pointed out that former governor Fiona Millar had now left the Governing Body, and LEM was due to leave imminently. Governors should consider the skills gap(s) left and the opportunity to widen the range of governors.

**ACTION Item 11.1** *All governors to consider skills gap(s) left by the departure of governors; **BLA** to circulate demographic analysis of student cohort to inform recruitment of co-opted governor.*

**11.2** SSK stressed a need generally to raise the profile of governance throughout the school. Only STA and DMO had responded to her recent request for a selfie and pen portrait to publish on the school website. All governors to comply.

**ACTION Item 11.2** *All governors to respond to SSK's request for a selfie and pen portrait for publishing on the school website.*

## 12. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting of 8 July 2021 were **AGREED** as a full and accurate record; SSK to sign after the meeting. There were no matters arising.

**Next scheduled meeting: Thursday 2 December 2021 at 5pm<sup>1</sup>**

There being no other business in this part of the meeting, SSK closed this part of the meeting at 6.37pm. She gave BLA and RYU permission to remain. Confidential items followed.

Signed.....

9 December 2021

**Selina Skipwith**  
**Chair of the Governing Body, William Ellis School**

**ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES**

**ACTION** *Item 3.7.1* **SSK** to remind governors confirm that they have read KCSiE on GovernorHub; **MHU** to remind them how to do so, and how to update their business and other interests.

**ACTION** *Item 7.4* **KDU, SJE, IJO** and **SSK** to discuss potential for hybrid governor meetings.

**ACTION** *Item 8.2* **SSK** to remind governors of their senior leadership links.

**ACTION** *Item 9.2* **KDU, LEM** and **JWO** to inform SSK if they consider that they may be disqualified from holding office as a governor.

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**ACTION** *Item 11.2* **All governors** to respond to SSK's request for a selfie and pen portrait for publishing on the school website.

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<sup>1</sup> Subsequently amended to 9 December 2021 at 5pm.