

# WILLIAM ELLIS SCHOOL



## MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY held at the school on Thursday 3 February 2022

### MINUTES

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GOVERNORS		Present
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Izzy Jones (IJO)	✓
<b>Co-opted</b>	Mr Jonny Woolf (JWO)	✓
	Ms Imogen Sharp (ISH)	✓
<b>Foundation</b>	Mr Richard Ault (RAU)	✓
	Ms Ronke Coote (RCO)	x
	Dame Karen Dunnell (KDU)	✓
	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
	VACANCY	N/A
<b>Local authority</b>	Mr Hanad Mohamed (HMO)	x
<b>Parent</b>	Ms Sophie Jenkins (SJE)	✓
	Mr Stuart Taylor (STA)	✓
<b>Staff</b>	Mr Rob Yurchesyn (RYU)	✓
<b>ATTENDING</b>		
	Mr Bernard Lane (BLA) <b>Deputy head</b>	
	Mr Mathew Scott (MSC) <b>Assistant head</b>	
	Mr Mike Hutchinson (MHU) <b>Clerk</b>	

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

SSK welcomed everyone to this William Ellis School FGB meeting, which began at 5.03pm. DMO attended remotely by video conference. Apologies were received from, and permission for absence granted to, RCO and HMO. NSI and STA apologised for an early departure. 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. All papers had been circulated in advance. SSK thanked KDU and SJE for attending a recent staff and school trustees' social event.

## 2. Receive headteacher's report

**2.1** SSK thanked IJO for her report and asked her to introduce it, which she did selectively as follows, noting that much of her report summarised papers to be presented later in the meeting.

**2.2 School self-evaluation** IJO pointed out that a school self-evaluation, which had been drafted collaboratively with senior leaders, would be introduced in detail by BLA as the next item on the agenda. Her report included a summary of this, with changes highlighted in bold.

**2.2.1** New **strengths** included support for the under-achieving KS4 cohort, a robust online homework system, a successful Challenge Partners peer review, better than average attendance and lower than average exclusions. Finances were robust.

**2.2.2** New **weaknesses** included curriculum provision for every student and weak Years 12 and 13 mock data, with a higher than expected number of students with likely U grades: interventions were in place. A number of Y12 may not proceed to Y13; for some, this may be an opportunity to consider fresh choices.

**2.2.3** A new **opportunity** was provided by external mentoring, and a new **threat** was financial uncertainty in a post-Covid landscape.

**2.3 Performance targets** IJO noted that the Headteacher's Performance Review Panel had finally met to review her progress on 2020-21 targets, and to set new targets for 2021-22, although three – on KS4 and KS5 progress, and partnering with Parliament Hill School – had been rolled over. Developing middle leadership and a fuller curriculum with more PE, sports and outdoor education were new targets.

**2.4** SSK thanked IJO for her summary. There were no questions.

## 3. Receive school self-evaluation

**3.1** SSK invited BLA to evaluate the school's performance, which he did by reference to the recent (17 January 2022) Challenge Partners peer review.

**3.2** Due to Covid-19, the review had been undertaken by a reduced team of two, but at least it had been in person. The previous year's review had been online, which meant that the reviewers had commented without meeting any students.

**3.3** There had been a lot of positives this year. The lead reviewer, who was also an Ofsted inspector, had been very sharp and good at detail and his feedback had been helpful. His associate had appreciated the boys' energy and confidence in communicating orally. The overall peer evaluation estimate was that the school was effective: this was not equivalent to an Ofsted grade.

**3.4** There had been many WWWs – what went well – but BLA focused on the EBIs – even better ifs.

**3.5** Leadership would benefit from refinements to support inclusive practice in teaching and learning and the curriculum. This had been set back by difficulties in recruiting and retaining a special educational needs co-ordinator (SENDCo).

**3.6** Curriculum leaders were knowledgeable and did some excellent work but, as the reviewers had noted, needed to develop their skills. Training had been booked.

**3.7** Plans were in place to improve formative assessment and highlight the school's strongest teaching for others to learn from it.

**3.8** Communicating students' needs more comprehensively to all staff had been compromised by Covid-19. Most of this work, which was being improved, was focused on K students – those with needs but without funding to address them.

**3.9** In short, there was work to do but there had been no shocks. The fact that WWWs outnumbered EBIs was a reminder that the school was doing some excellent work.

**3.10** SSK thanked BLA for his introduction and called for questions, all of which were prefaced by governors' appreciation of the number of aspects of the school which were going well. BLA and IJO answered questions as follows.

**3.11 When will the school submit an “area of excellence” for a Challenge Partners review and what might it be [SJE ]?** Two years previously the school had considered submitting outdoor education as an area of excellence. Then Covid-19 had intervened. Literacy was another option. This year, the school's leaders had wanted to consolidate the core aspects of the school's work, securing classroom teaching and learning. An area of excellence would definitely be put forward next year.

**3.12 What plans are in place to improve the sharing of students' needs and best practice in teaching [ISH]?** A change in the school's policy on mobile phones had illustrated the time and effort required to change the school's culture. A balance had to be struck between thoroughness, speed of change and workload. To see sustained improvement, initiatives needed careful selection. Not all initiatives could be the highest priority. The School Development Plan might have to be phased.

**3.13** RYU agreed that there were different ways of sharing best practice, and limited value in sharing comprehensively. Improvement in literacy had been a good example of the long haul necessary to reach a valuable outcome. Elsewhere, communications had been frustrating, particularly about SEND students.

#### **4. Receive report on curriculum planning 2022-23**

**4.1** SSK invited MSC to introduce his report on curriculum planning 2022-23, which he did as follows.

**4.2** The curriculum consisted of everything planned and delivered over an academic year. This report concentrated on delivery in the classroom, which made up 89 per cent of a students' day.

**4.3** Perhaps the biggest change proposed for 2022-23 was to teach next year's Y9 in four, rather than five, groups, with the roll permanently capped at the current 180 students. A fifth group could provide extra support for specific students in English, maths and perhaps science. Capping numbers saved a notional £100k.

**4.4** Another intention – which had always been an ambition – was to teach food technology at KS3, providing a grounding for the subject at KS4. Subject to budget constraints, sociology would be taught at KS4 and KS5: an externally advertised post would also lead on the teaching of personal, social and health education (PSHE).

**4.5** SSK thanked MSC for his introduction and called for questions, which he and IJO answered as follows.

**4.6 Where is the pressure coming from for the teaching of RE and sociology [KDU]?** The pressure was to find GCSEs that were accessible in terms of the need for literacy and their content, compared with that of more demanding subjects.

**4.7 What effect will reducing numbers in Y9 have on teaching [SJE]?** It would bring Y9 into line with other year groups.

**4.8 Why is the EBacc important and what is XL [ISH]?** Teaching more EBacc subjects would boost the school's key Progress 8 metric. XL was a Prince's Trust Level 1 qualification in English and maths. The school was seeking to supplement it with other options, such as a sports leadership course at Talacre Community Sports Centre in Kentish Town.

**4.9 How feasible is a £100k saving from reducing numbers in Y9 [STA]?** It would only be achieved if the right members of staff left at the right time. In effect, it would be £100k-worth of added staffing capacity which could be allocated to other subjects. The appointment of a SENDCo would substantially reduced the "saving". BLA pointed out that Y8 students were currently lucky because they were taught in class sizes of 20.

**4.10 Does that result in more progress by students and less pressure on teachers [SJE]?** Teaching workload reduced and the quality of marking rose, but there was no evidence that students made more progress when taught in smaller classes.

**4.11 What is the idea of pairing sociology with PHSE, and will it help to recruit a PHSE lead [RYU]?** The school had advertised twice internally this year without result. This was an opportunity to combine two leads to give the appropriate individual more responsibility and higher remuneration. Sociology and PHSE were clearly not the same subject but there was some cross over. The PHSE teaching team would shrink.

**4.12 What happens if only ten or as many as 50 students want to take the sociology course [KDU]?** Their preferences would be respected as much as possible. New courses often ran at a loss to get them up and running as viable options.

**4.13 How much will the sociology and PHSE appointment cost [KDU]?** Around £40k, from the existing staff budget, if no one left. One option was a fixed-term post.

**4.14** IJO added that generally this curriculum plan was about marginal gains in the existing curriculum, not a radically different model. It was about measured, sustained improvements in what it was important to get right, remembering the needs of all students in order to make sustained improvements in a recovery curriculum model. The curriculum remained relatively EBacc-dominated in that almost all students had the option of a language at KS4.

**4.15** SSK thanked MSC again, and MSC and IJO for answering questions.

**[MSC left the meeting at 6.17pm.]**

## **5. Review workplan and policy schedule**

**5.1 Workplan** Governors **AGREED** the workplan.

**5.2 Policy schedule** IJO pointed out that the Equality Policy with objectives had been agreed by governors at the FGB of 3 December 2020; the policy and objectives should next be reviewed in December 2023. MHU to amend schedule. The Attendance Policy should be added to the schedule; it had been reviewed by the School Improvement Committee in January 2022 and was due for review again in January 2025. MHU to add to policy review schedule.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>Item 5.2</b>	<i>MHU to amend agreement and review of Equality Policy on, and add Attendance Policy to, policy schedule.</i>
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## 6. Approve SFVS

KDU reminded members of the committee that the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) was a way for governors to annually audit the school's effectiveness and probity. Governors **AGREED** this final version of the SFVS; IJO to ensure it is sent to Camden by deadline.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>Item 6</b>	<i>IJO to ensure final version of SFVS is sent to Camden by deadline.</i>
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## 7. Receive reports from committees

**7.1 School Improvement Committee** SJE, who chairs this committee, reported that it had met on 13 January 2022. Draft minutes had been circulated. The meeting had discussed the Attendance Policy and in particular the theoretical fining of parents for their sons' poor attendance.

**7.2 Personnel and Resources Committee** KDU, who chairs this committee, reported that it had met on 27 January 2022. Draft minutes were not yet available, but finalised minutes of the previous (2 December 2021) meeting had been circulated. The meeting had received reports on safeguarding, staffing and the school's finances, among other issues. Members of the committee had met the new director of the joint (with Parliament Hill) business unit, Rita Hender (RHE) for the first time.

## 8. Appoint Lee Elliot Major as associate and to committee

Governors **AGREED** to appoint Professor Lee Elliot Major (LEM) as an associate of the Governing Body, and to appoint him to the School Improvement Committee.

## 9. Discuss Ofsted preparation

SSK thought that longstanding governors were as prepared as they could be for an Ofsted inspection. She would organise training for newer governors. All governors to familiarise themselves with documents in the Ofsted folder on GovernorHub.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>Item 9</b>	<i>SSK to organise training for newer governors in Ofsted matters; <b>all governors</b> to familiarise themselves with documents in the Ofsted folder on GovernorHub.</i>
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**[STA and NSI left the meeting at 6.26pm.]**

## 10. Review policies and other documents

**Behaviour Policy** This statutory policy had been reviewed at the 13 January 2022 School Improvement Committee meeting. ISH pointed out that she would be agreeing the minor amendments discussed at that meeting with assistant head Karl Altmann. With those changes, governors **AGREED** the Behaviour Policy.

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

11.1 The minutes of the meeting of 9 December 2021 were **AGREED** as a full and accurate record; SSK to sign after the meeting. There was one matter arising.

11.2 **Item 9.2** SSK noted that the team leading marketing and a refreshed website would be approaching governors for a selfie and a pen portrait.

11.3 The action on the annual work plan had been referenced in this course of this meeting and the action on food poverty was in the process of being fulfilled.

## 12. Any other business

**Lanyards** IJO urged those governors who still had not received a lanyard with ID badge to inform RHE, so that they could be issued.

**ACTION Item 12** **Governors without a lanyard** to inform RHE.

There being no further business, SSK thanked all present for attending and closed the meeting at 6.30pm.

**Next scheduled meeting: Thursday 24 March 2022 at 5pm**

Signed.....

24 March 2022

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

### ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES

**ACTION Item 5.2** **MHU** to amend agreement and review of Equality Policy on, and add Attendance Policy to, policy schedule.

**ACTION Item 6** **IJO** to ensure final version of SFVS is sent to Camden by deadline.

**ACTION Item 9** **SSK** to organise training for newer governors in Ofsted matters; **all governors** to familiarise themselves with documents in the Ofsted folder on GovernorHub.

**ACTION Item 12** **Governors without a lanyard** to inform RHE.