

# WILLIAM ELLIS SCHOOL



## MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY held at the school on Thursday 8 December 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>	Dame Karen Dunnell (KDU)	✓
	Mr Sean Harford (SHA)	✓
	Mrs Sophie Jenkins (SJE)	✓
	Mr Hugh Matheson (HMA)	✓
	Prof Daniel Monk (DMO) <b>Vice chair</b>	✓
	Mr Daniel Needleman (DNE)	✓ <sup>1</sup>
	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>	Mr Carlton Hood (CHO)	✓
	Mr Stuart Taylor (STA)	✗
<b>Staff</b>	Mr Rob Yurchesyn (RYU)	✗
<b>ASSOCIATES</b>		
	Mrs Ronke Coote (RCO)	✗
	Prof Lee Elliot Major (LEM)	✗
<b>ATTENDING</b>		
	Mr John Clark (JCL) <b>Observer</b>	
	Mr Bernard Lane (BLA) <b>Deputy head</b>	
	Mr Karl Altmann (KAL) <b>Assistant head</b>	
	Mr Mike Hutchinson (MHU) <b>Clerk</b>	

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<sup>1</sup> By video conference.

## 1. Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

SSK welcomed all present to this William Ellis School FGB meeting, which began at 5.01pm. She particularly welcomed JCL, who is undertaking a governance review of the school. Apologies were received from, and permission for absence granted to, STA, JWO and RYU, as well as Matthew Scott and Flora Wilson, who as senior assistant heads often attend these meetings. There were no apologies from RCO, LEM or HMO. KAL had apologised for a late arrival. A quorum was present. There were no declarations of interest, pecuniary or otherwise, in respect of any items on this agenda. All papers had been circulated in advance.

## 2. Receive chair's report

**2.1** SSK thanked IJO, her staff and governors for their time, energy and commitment over the calendar year. She listed various activities.

**2.2** She had now received the terms of reference for JCL's governance review. She had attended a Camden meeting to review the achievements and strategy of the sixth form consortium LaSWAP, of which William Ellis was a member and which she chairs. A report was awaited.

**[ISH joined the meeting with apologies at 5.04pm.]**

**2.3** Among other activities, she had attended a behaviour review with KAL and SHA; a report back by the school's Challenge Partners peer reviewers; a meeting of the trustees of the charitable William Ellis and Birkbeck Schools Trust; and a meeting of the school's parents' association, WESPA. On the following day she would be attending a meeting of the Camden project board with IJO.

**2.4** FGB papers which were for information only had been asterisked on the agenda. The number of papers submitted to governor meetings would be one of the subjects for review by JCL. She thanked ISH for tracking these documents.

**2.5** SJE thanked SSK for all her hard work for the school; governors applauded.

## 3. Receive headteacher's report

**3.1** SSK thanked IJO for her report and asked her to introduce it: she explained that it consisted of a number of papers, which she summarised.

**3.2** The **School Development Plan** had been redrafted to render it clearer and easier to navigate. The first section detailed KPIs (key performance indicators). The second focused on actions following the Ofsted inspection, drawing on other implementation plans organised according to the Ofsted framework. Most, written by individual senior leaders, were to give those leaders a clear sense of what they were trying to do.

**3.3** The school's **self-evaluation** had been amended to clarify areas of improvement following feedback from the recent (17 November 2022) School Improvement Committee meeting.

**3.4** The **Inspection Data Summary Report** from the Department for Education (DfE) summarised the information on which the Ofsted inspectors had based their inspection, with particular lines of enquiry highlighted. Two were of particular interest.

**3.5** Poor progress in subjects classed as “open” was due to the curriculum that had been deliberately chosen as appropriate for the students. The number of suspensions for assault was lower than that nationally for disadvantaged boys.

**3.6** The Camden Learning report on the **standards meeting** held on 20 October 2022 was included for information. IJO would be reviewing the **project board report** and its improvement plan with SSK on the following day.

**3.7** The report following a **Challenge Partners** peer review would be shared with parents and considered in full at the next (26 January 2023) School Improvement Committee meeting. It included some useful suggestions for improvement but not, to encourage openness and transparency, any Ofsted-style ratings.

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

**3.9** SHA advised preparing a clear explanation for why 28 students left the school in 2018-19, given Ofsted concerns about off-rolling – that is, removing students from the school illicitly to boost exam outcomes.

**3.10 How does current retention of students in the sixth form compare with the weak figure of 69 per cent in 2019 [SHA]?** It was not excellent due to the policy, during the pandemic, of accepting students with weak teacher-assessed grades.

**3.11 If the sixth form accepts students with weak grades aren't they setting them up to fail [SHA]?** SSK replied that policy had been discussed at the LaSWAP Governors' Forum: it had been agreed in order not to discriminate against students who, through no fault of their own, had been unable to take formal GCSE exams.

**3.12** IJO highlighted rising numbers of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) – particularly in the sixth form – but slightly fewer students at the school in receipt of the Pupil Premium. The number of students going on to higher education was significantly above the national average.

**3.13 Does the school continue to hold a place open for a permanently excluded pupil to ensure that Camden can find a place elsewhere [DMO]?** BLA answered this question. It did: unfortunately the numbers of parents opting to home-educate their permanently-excluded child had risen over Covid, raising safeguarding concerns.

#### **4. Receive report on Pupil Premium**

**4.1** SSK thanked BLA for his report on Pupil Premium spending and asked him to introduce it, which he did as follows.

**4.2** This was the second year of a three-year plan for spending the Pupil Premium. There had been significant improvement in outcomes in 2021-22 compared to 2019-20, when public exams last took place. The gap between the outcomes of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils had reduced slightly, which was positive compared to the widening of the gap nationally over the pandemic.

**4.3** Teachers were constantly urged to employ the strategies set out in the plan.

**4.4** SSK thanked BLA for his introduction and called for questions, of which she asked the first.

**4.5 How realistic is a target of 97 per cent attendance for Pupil Premium students [SSK]?** IJO pointed out that the target for all students was also 97 per cent: it was aspirational but dropping it would send out a negative message.

**4.6 Should a target not be achievable [KDU]?** IJO was reluctant to reduce the target as, pre-pandemic, the school had been closing in on it. ISH suggested milestones: SSK pointed out that these were being included in the Camden project board's KPIs. IJO said she would consider ISH's suggestion that whole-school attendance milestones could be useful motivators, given the challenging 97 per cent target.

**4.7 Would staff welcome a more achievable goal [ISH]?** Parents and students had been told that the 97 per cent goal would improve academic progress.

**4.8 Apart from a slight narrowing of the disadvantaged gap, what other progress has there been [CHO]?** BLA highlighted tangible results from the literacy strategy. Individual students had benefited greatly from academic interventions. Many had made good progress though others still faced challenges.

**4.9 For £300k, shouldn't the school be able to show greater progress for Pupil Premium students [CHO]?** SSK answered this question: there were so many Pupil Premium students at William Ellis that the Pupil Premium strategy was effectively a whole-school policy, reflected in the progress of all pupils.

**4.10 What is the direction of travel and should staff be trained in the appearance and challenges of disadvantage [SJE]?** BLA cited the impact that investment in the homework platform Satchel One had had on all students, but particularly disadvantaged pupils. Every member of staff recognised disadvantage – Covid had given them a sense of it as never before. IJO was concerned that a dip in Pupil Premium funding disguised students who remained unfunded by the Pupil Premium due to factors like reduced eligibility for benefits and free school meals.

**4.11 With inflation and fiscal drag increasing, shouldn't highlighting this anomaly be a priority [HMA]?** SHA pointed out that Camden children were effectively overfunded compared to children elsewhere. IJO confirmed that the school supported parents to apply for free school meals. No one was getting less poor and less needy.

**4.12** She added that forthcoming data on Y11 mock grades would differentiate between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium students.

## **5. Receive reports from committees**

**5.1 School Improvement Committee** SJE, who chairs this committee, reported that it had met on 17 November 2022. Draft minutes were on GovernorHub. The committee had received a candid report on maths and an update on the school's teaching and learning policy. It had, as earlier reported, reviewed the school's self-evaluation, and also agreed policies on relationships and sex education, and SEND.

**5.2 Pay Committee** JWO, who chaired this committee, having given apologies, HMA reported that it had met on 10 November 2022 to review IJO's recommendations for teachers' performance-related pay increases. Minutes were confidential.

**5.2.1** IJO had presented 21 recommendations, of which seven were on the leadership scale, six on the upper scale and eight on the main scale of teacher pay grades. Members of the committee had reviewed and accepted all IJO's recommendations. No teacher had moved up more than a single pay grade.

**5.2.2** Members of the committee had then discussed its remit. JWO and HMA had reviewed a template terms of reference, which would be discussed at the next (12 January 2023) meeting of the Personnel and Resources Committee.

**ACTION** *Item 5.2.2* **MHU** to schedule discussion of Pay Committee terms of reference on agenda of next (12 January 2023) PRC.

## **6. Agree policies and other documents**

**6.1 Admissions Criteria September 2023** Governors **AGREED** the Admissions Criteria for September 2023.

**6.2 Pay Policy** Governors **AGREED** the Pay Policy.

**6.3 SEND Policy and Information Report** Governors **AGREED** the SEND Policy and Information Report.

**6.4 Governors' Expenses Policy** Governors **AGREED** the Governors' Expenses Policy.

**6.5 Attendance Policy** Governors **AGREED** the Attendance Policy.

## **7. Receive governor attendance report 2021-22**

Governors **NOTED** the attendance report for 2021-22.

## **8. Receive updates on governor training and visits to school**

**8.1 Old Elysians** As link governor for careers and alumni, DMO reported that a pilot project had seen five Old Elysians visit the school, hosted by five Y9 ambassadors. A Q&A session had been particularly enjoyable. Collaboration with Old Elysians could bring huge benefits, not least in placement opportunities. He thanked pastoral leader Andrew Mangham, KAL and IJO for their support in organising the visit. DMO had also held a separate online meeting with Old Elysians.

**8.2 Attendance** As link governor for attendance, ISH had attended four meetings with parents on their sons' persistent absence. IJO reported that she hoped shortly to meet councillor Marcus Boyland, cabinet member for Children, Schools and Families, following ISH's contact with him on behalf of the school.

**8.3 Wider representation** ISH reported, for the record, that she was no longer a member of the steering group of the Camden Music Hub, nor of Camden's Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee.

**8.4 Access arrangements** ISH had raised the issue of equitable exam access arrangements with Martin Pratt, Camden's executive director for Supporting People. He had promised to highlight the issue within Camden Learning.

**8.5 Police within schools** ISH had also raised with Martin Pratt the issue of the withdrawal of William Ellis's – and other Camden schools' – onsite police officers. IJO reported that she had been advised that dedicated police officers were no longer feasible. She would raise their demise at the next (23 January 2023) Camden headteacher's meeting. SSK thanked ISH for doggedly pursuing the issue and encouraged other governors to raise it whenever and wherever possible.

**[KAL joined the meeting at 6.10pm.]**

## **9. Receive report on safeguarding**

**9.1** SSK thanked KAL for his report on safeguarding and asked him to introduce it, which he did as follows.

**9.2** Safeguarding was everyone's responsibility: to that end, all staff had been trained to use the safeguarding monitoring software CPOMS. Many had now received additional safeguarding training so that they could eventually specialise in specific areas such as radicalisation or substance misuse.

**9.3** Hayley Ward (HWA), the school's dedicated safeguarding and child protection officer, attended all safeguarding meetings and fed back key points to staff.

**9.4** The mnemonic LAMBS – learning, attendance, mental health, behaviour and safeguarding – was proving useful in the course of pupil review meetings.

**9.5** SSK reported that, as the new link governor for safeguarding, she had met with KAL and HWA and witnessed CPOMS at work. She and HWA would meet termly. SSK planned to attend next term's sixth form safeguarding meeting and the equivalent heads of year meeting in summer, to monitor consistency of provision.

**9.6** SSK thanked KAL for his introduction and called for questions.

**9.7 How much would it cost for tutors to receive the additional safeguarding training [SHA]?** IJO thought the expense was more in terms of time.

**9.8 Could those who have received the training train those who haven't [SHA]?** KAL thought that it could be worth training a core group of tutors who had expressed particular interest in safeguarding; they could then be lead safeguarding tutor within their year group.

## **10. Receive report on attendance**

**10.1** SSK thanked KAL for his report on attendance and asked him to introduce it, which he did as follows, answering questions as he did so.

**10.2** In the table of Fisher Family Trust data, William Ellis was more or less in line with other schools nationally, with the exception of Y9, where persistent absence was higher (35 per cent compared with 26 per cent nationally).

**10.3** Numbers were skewed by the small year group, and a single non-attending boy who remained on roll – but they were still too high. Attendance of SEND students and those in receipt of free school meals was above the national average.

**10.4** Comparisons with Camden schools, and other comprehensive schools which used the new management information system Bromcom, were relatively positive.

**10.5** KAL paid tribute to the work of his predecessor, Guy Forbat (GFA), whose excellent work on an attendance strategy – including dedicated staff roles and responsibilities, and regular review meetings – was beginning to bear fruit.

**10.6** ISH, as link governor for this issue, noted that she and KAL had homed in on the 75 persistent non-attenders (PNAs) who attended 85 per cent of the time or less. Regular reports on support for PNAs would be welcome.

**10.7** At the latest of the four meetings she had attended with the families of persistent absentees, the attendance of the child involved had been 14 per cent, though it had previously dipped to 8 per cent. The attendance rate of the three other children who were the subject of meetings had been 40, 60 and 66 per cent.

**10.8** ISH had also reviewed how school action on behaviour, safeguarding and attendance aligned. She proposed a Governors' PNA Group to explore the reasons for the poor attendance and behaviour of the students in question.

**ACTION Item 10.8** *IJO to schedule meeting of a governor focus group on behaviour, safeguarding and attendance; all governors to consider volunteering to attend.*

**10.9** Governors' next focus should be on effective good practice, with a checklist to improve effective action. This was work in progress by KAL, following GFA's groundwork and KAL's discussions with Ed Magee, Camden's attendance lead.

**10.10** IJO was concerned that fining parents for poor attendance risked them taking their child out of school to be home-educated. KAL agreed that there were significant safeguarding risks involved, given so few checks and balances on home-schooling. Staff were required to raise any safeguarding concerns in these circumstances. SSK urged KAL to update governors on any emerging patterns.

**ACTION Item 10.10** *KAL to update governors on any emerging patterns in home-schooling following fines for poor attendance.*

**10.11** ISH reminded governors that she would be stepping down as a William Ellis governor shortly; they would need to appoint a new link governor for attendance.

**10.12** KAL added that the adoption of Bromcom had allowed more detailed analysis of behaviour statistics, yielding potentially informative comparative data over time.

**10.13** SSK thanked KAL and ISH and called for questions, of which there were two, which KAL answered as follows.

**10.14 How concerned are you about teachers whose adherence to the behaviour strategy is less than rigorous [CHO]?** At least one teacher had not been following the strategy; a conversation had ensued.

**10.15 Was that conversation with a teacher who was not using Bromcom or CPOMS [SJE]?** It concerned the use of Bromcom, which was used to track behaviour: CPOMS tracked safeguarding issues.

**[KAL, KDU and DMO left the meeting at 7pm.]**

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

**11.1** The minutes of the meeting of 13 October 2022 were **AGREED** as a full and accurate record; SSK to sign after the meeting. There were a number of matters arising.

**11.2 Item 7** All governors to undertake National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) safeguarding training, through link circulated by IJO. SSK noted that she had asked Camden Learning whether it could buy into the online educational resource The Key for Governors, which offered similar training.

**ACTION Item 11.2** *All governors to undertake NSPCC safeguarding training.*

**11.3 Item 21.3** STA to confirm liaison with the School Council on toxic masculinity.

**ACTION Item 11.3** *STA to confirm that he has brainstormed practical ways to address toxic masculinity in school with School Council.*

**11.4** All other actions had been, or were in the process of being, fulfilled.

## 12. Any other business

There was no other business.

### Next scheduled meeting: Thursday 2 February 2023 at 5pm

There being no further business in this part of the meeting, SSK thanked all present for attending, wished them an enjoyable festive season, and closed this part of the meeting at 7.05pm. BLA left the meeting at this point. Confidential items followed.

Signed.....

2 February 2023

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

### ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES

**ACTION** **Item 5.2.2** **MHU** to schedule discussion of Pay Committee terms of reference on agenda of next (12 January 2023) PRC.

**ACTION** **Item 10.8** **IJO** to schedule inaugural meeting of governor focus group on behaviour, safeguarding and attendance; **all governors** to consider volunteering to attend.

**ACTION** **Item 10.10** **KAL** to update governors on any emerging patterns in home-schooling following fines for poor attendance.

**ACTION** **Item 11.2** **All governors** to undertake NSPCC safeguarding training.

**ACTION** **Item 11.3** **STA** to confirm that he has brainstormed practical ways to address toxic masculinity in school with School Council.