

WILLIAM ELLIS SCHOOL



MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY held at the school on Thursday 17 May 2018

MINUTES

GOVERNORS		Present
Headteacher	Mr Sam White (HT)	✓
LA	Ms Georgia Gould (GGO)	✓
Elected parent	Ms Imogen Sharp (ISH)	✓
Elected staff	Mr Richard Whitenstall (RWH)	✓
Foundation	Mr Richard Ault (RAU)	✓
	Dame Karen Dunnell (KDU)	✓
	Dr Lee Elliot-Major (LEM)	✓
	Prof Conor Gearty (CGE) Vice chair	✓
	Mr Omar Hamon (OHA)	✓
	Ms Fiona Millar (FMI) Chair	✓
	Prof Daniel Monk (DMO)	✓
	Ms Selina Skipwith (SSK)	✓
Co-opted	Ms Laura Concannon (LCO)	✓
	Ms Pandora Kay-Kreizman (PKK)	✓
ASSOCIATE		
	Mr Abdi Ahmed (AAH)	✓
ATTENDING		
	Mr Mike Hutchinson (MHU) Clerk	

1. Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

FMI welcomed everyone to this FGB meeting, which began at 5.06pm. She particularly welcomed AAH, a former governor who was now an associate. ISH had apologised for a late arrival. No other apologies were necessary as all governor 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 distributed in advance.

2. Chair's report

2.1 Governor moves FMI reported that the terms of office of Ronke Coote (RCO – a Foundation governor) and Jonny Woolf (JWO – a parent governor), had recently expired. She proposed that she ask that RCO be reappointed as a Foundation governor. Given that LCO, a member of staff who was a co-opted governor, had announced that she would be stepping down at the end of this term, FMI proposed that, when the time came, governors should co-opt JWO in LCO's place. Governors **AGREED** to both proposals.

[RAU joined the meeting with apologies at 5.07pm.]

2.2 Attendance panels FMI noted that she had formed, with HT, a panel to review the poor attendance of seven William Ellis students, only three of whom had turned up. One learning point had been that the school was agreeing to too many authorised absences for illness. Another was the complex and very different home backgrounds in each case, which contributed to the attendance issues. FMI and HT had agreed to meet all the students concerned again in a month.

ACTION Item 2.2 *FMI and HT to meet all the students invited to attend attendance panels again, in a month's time.*

3. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

3.1 The minutes of the meeting of 22 March 2018 were **AGREED** as a full and accurate record. FMI to sign them after the meeting. There were a number of matters arising.

3.2 Item 4.3.10 HT apologised that he had not yet organised a governor focus group on homework: he would ask Izzy Jones (IJO – assistant head) to do this.

ACTION Item 3.2 *HT to ask IJO organise governor focus group on homework.*

3.3 Item 4.4.2 HT apologised that he had not yet investigated the availability of online lead practitioner CPD: he would ask IJO to do this.

ACTION Item 3.3 *HT to ask IJO to investigate availability of online lead practitioner CPD.*

3.4 Item 4.4.4 Given that a proposed new School Development Plan would be discussed later in this meeting, HT had not amended the previous plan to reference "briefing" of governors on curriculum planning, rather than "training".

3.5 Item 7.1 HT explained that he had not yet ensured that exit interviews were conducted with staff who were leaving, as none had left yet.

3.6 The two other actions had been, or were in the process of being, fulfilled.

[OHA joined the meeting with apologies at 5.13pm.]

4. Approve 2018-19 budget

4.1 FMI noted that the draft 2018-19 budget had been reviewed and discussed at length at the May meeting of the Resources Committee, which had noted that in-year deficits over this and the next two years were much smaller than had been predicted three years ago: the hard work of school staff had paid off.

4.2 However, in-year deficits remained. The school had either to increase income or reduce expenditure. She noted the Personnel and Resources Committee's request for a report on the financial benefit of a higher roll in Years 7-11 and a full roll in the sixth form.

4.3 RAU, who chairs the Resources Committee, noted that past deficits in the order of £500k or so had been more than halved. Current and predicted deficits stood at less than two per cent of the entire budget.

4.4 GGO, the LA governor, said that Camden had pledged more money for education in the borough: the question was how much it could afford, and how far the money would go.

4.5 HT noted that the current building works, funded by Camden, meant that the school was not having to spend money on maintaining or improving its premises.

4.6 Governors **AGREED** the 2018-19 budget.

5. Youth safety / knife crime

5.1 FMI asked AAH, who sits on Camden's new Youth Safety Taskforce, and GGO to lead a discussion on youth safety and knife crime.

5.2 They explained that previously low knife crime in Camden had increased rapidly over recent months. The reasons were unclear, although domestic violence, neglect or early trauma lay behind every case. Perpetrators could also be victims, whose silence compounded the problem. One family had lost three children to knife crime.

5.3 A big drugs market in Camden was currently expanding. The new Youth Safety Taskforce, which had been set up in December 2017 and was chaired by Holborn and St Pancras MP Sir Keir Starmer, had heard evidence that children were groomed and exploited as drugs couriers, lured by easy money. Social media and rap music fueled a culture of gang violence.

5.4 Ironically, many young people carried knives because they were scared.

5.5 Cuts in the number of police officers – down from more than 800 in Camden to just 274 officers now – meant fewer opportunities to stop and search suspects. Youth support services had also been cut throughout London, although less so in Camden.

5.6 However, a greater focus on countering gang violence in the south of the borough had meant less investment in the nearby Queens Crescent area of Kentish Town, where all communities were affected, but that of Somalis especially. Four recent local deaths had been of Somali men.

[ISH joined the meeting at 5.25pm.]

5.7 AAH said that the young people most at risk – who were often excluded from school, effectively left school at 12, 13 or 14 years old, and were known to the criminal justice system – appeared to see no link between dealing drugs and knife crime.

5.8 He recounted his horror when called to Queens Crescent in February to find that two young people had been stabbed to death within hours of each other, by murderers who appeared to have no fear of the police, murdering in plain sight.

5.9 The resulting trauma of families was shocking and inconsolable. Their grief was compounded by the use of music videos on social media which glorified killings and goaded rival gangs. Weapons were easy to source online.

5.10 The young men concerned struggled with their masculinity. Aggression was their default state. Many were very talented. Some transformed their lives for the better. They were hard to reach, but society should never give up on them.

5.11 Similar issues in Tottenham in 2006 had been successfully resolved by bringing the most prominent members of rival gangs together and supporting gang members to reintegrate into society through innovative interventions. It could be done.

5.12 One of the greatest obstacles was a lack of trust in the police. AAH had visited one young stabbing victim in hospital, who steadfastly refused to tell the police anything. This attitude – partly for fear of reprisal – was commonplace.

5.13 GGO identified some initiatives, starting with the Youth Safety Taskforce, which included a broad range of stakeholders. The violence prevention initiative Growing Against Violence undertook excellent education work. Every Camden secondary school had a dedicated Safer Schools Officer, partly to enhance security, and partly to break down barriers between young people and the police.

5.14 One area of concern identified by the Youth Safety Taskforce had been the transition from primary to secondary school. Play services ceased at eight years old; youth services did not start until recipients were 13 year of age.

5.15 Camden might also be able to learn from the public health approach of Strathclyde Police's Violence Reduction Unit, and the childhood trauma-related focus of the Wave [Worldwide Alternatives to Violence] Trust. GGO also highlighted the peer-led work of Project 10/10, which supported marginalised Camden 18- to 25-year-olds by, among other things, offering them "micro employment" opportunities.

5.16 FMI thanked AAH and GGO for their powerful presentation and asked for questions, of which she asked the first: unless otherwise indicated, GGO answered the questions.

5.17 How could William Ellis School help [FMI]? Schools could most powerfully intervene to prevent the slide into gang violence of low-attaining students who were at risk of exclusion.

5.18 Was it possible to spot at-risk individuals in time to make a difference [FMI]? GGO hoped it was. HT pointed out that most childhood trauma was invisible to schools. Additionally, even if schools identified at-risk characteristics, they could not assume that gang violence was an inevitable destination. However, it was shocking to hear the names of perpetrators and victims who had quite happily risen through the school together as colleagues.

5.19 What were the motivations of the violence [KDU]? It differed in each case. In one example, a fight broke out at a party and the victim was stabbed and killed with his own knife. Other murders were drug- or gang-related.

5.20 Were William Ellis boys at risk [CGE]? They were. GGO had seen a William Ellis boy in court for possession of wholesale quantities of drugs, who had walked free because he was about to take his GCSE exams. For his handlers, their system had worked: he was free to act again as a drugs courier.

5.21 PKK was adamant that no drugs were dealt in school. HT agreed, but pointed out that Class A drugs, without the tell-tale scent of marijuana, were easier to hide. However, the school's heavy surveillance would discover any drugs eventually.

5.22 How were concerns shared between agencies [RWH]? GGO explained the concept of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). However, adolescents at risk tended to be less visible and more vulnerable than younger children. Did William Ellis benefit from the workshops of the organisation Growing Against Violence? HT was unsure, but the school had hosted similar workshops on deep learning days.¹

5.23 Could more be done to bring schools and youth services together to bridge the gap between services for eight- and 13-year-olds [FMI]? Certainly: grooming of drugs couriers and potential gang members could start as early as nine years' old. Reaching out to them early stood a chance of developing a level of priceless trust.

5.24 How strong was the correlation between lack of investment in community services and knife crime [CGE]? Across London, it was definitely strong, but that was not the full answer. Violence would have increased as a result of burgeoning social media links in any case. Intense work to counter gangs was expensive but worked. To lever individuals out of a gang was difficult and costly, but possible.

5.25 What was being done to bridge the gap between young people and the police [OHA]? AAH replied to this question: previously, Safer Neighbourhood teams of police officers had excelled at sharing vital information and breaking down barriers. They had disappeared over the last decade. GGO added that Safer Schools Officers had partly filled the gap left behind. Generally, the police did not have the capacity to deal with the level of crime in London. Camden had invested £550k in community wardens, but could not do that for ever. Ultimately, the gap in a visible police presence would have to be plugged at a national level.

5.26 Why was the community so silent [OHA]? GGO pointed out that the community's youngsters were silent, but their parents certainly were not. They were prepared to work with the police, but their children were scared.

5.27 Could GGO say more about the work of WAVE [ISH]? The organisation, largely funded by donations, aimed to break damaging, inter-generational family cycles, through what it called "primary prevention". She had invited the organisation to address the Youth Safety Taskforce. HT noted that Camden headteachers would be meeting with the taskforce's co-chair, Sir Keir Starmer, on the following afternoon.

5.28 Could William Ellis boys be taught basic first aid [SSK]? HT said that they already were, in Y10. Students on Duke of Edinburgh Award courses also had to be trained. GGO recommended Street Doctors, which aims to give young people the skills and confidence to deliver life-saving first aid.

5.29 HT praised William Ellis's Safer Schools Officer, Jack Rae, who was highly effective in building relationships with the school's most vulnerable students and was a useful conduit for information about students at risk. That risk had been part of the reason why Y11 students were not allowed to leave the school at lunchtime.

5.30 FMI thanked all concerned for a thorough discussion of a troubling issue.

6. School Development Plan 2018-19

6.1 HT gave a PowerPoint presentation on the draft School Development Plan 2018-19, tabling it also as hard copy. MHU to circulate in digital form after meeting.

ACTION *Item 6.1* **MHU to circulate digital copy of draft School Development Plan.**

¹ Update: Growing Against Violence to attend the school's next Deep Learning Day in July 2018.

6.2 This was a relatively light, outline document, based largely on last year's, which focused on the essentials. General agreement had been not to change its focus hugely. The school's purpose prefaced the document:

"...to develop in our students the knowledge, skills and qualities, strengthen their character and resolve, so that they are well qualified and prepared for their future success and well-being".

6.3 This addressed a concern about schools focusing on exam outcomes to the exclusion of relationships, decision making and the ability for students to look after themselves, all essential in preparing students for a challenging early adulthood.

6.4 That said, performance outcomes within the plan were largely academic. HT highlighted the school's ambition for Progress 8 to be better than for boys nationally, and for Progress 8 for the school's 60 per cent – excluding outliers – of disadvantaged boys to be the same as for all boys.

6.5 KDU pointed out that the recent School Improvement Committee had asked for comparative data about the percentages of the school's students who lived in Camden's most deprived enclaves.

6.6 HT continued. The school aimed to retain 60 per cent of Y11 students into suitable LaSWAP Level 3 courses; attain positive Level 3 Value Added (VA) in all subjects; ensure at least 98 per cent of Y11 went on to education, employment or training; and match national SEND progress for its SEND students.

6.7 These were, in fact, the same outcomes that governors had agreed last year, which he suggested were reasonable to continue, though he warned that the school was unlikely to hit its attendance target this year.

6.8 Given the emphasis of the school's statement of purpose, why were there no non-academic targets [LEM]? HT thought that attendance and destinations were suitably non-academic. KDU suggested lobbying the new head of Ofsted in pursuit of a nationwide emphasis on wider, more rounded education.

6.9 Governors pointed out a number of further potential non-academic outcomes, including the number of disadvantaged students engaging in extra-curricular activity [FMI]; participation in KS3 camps [LCO]; and the proportion of students taking art, music and drama courses [KDU].

6.10 HT to consider these and other options, including outcomes referencing sport and adult education, and the participation of students in leadership roles. FMI suggested integrating the performance outcomes and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) listed later in HT's presentation. HT suggested that external measures such as surveys could also provide relevant evaluation information.

ACTION Item 6.10

HT to consider non-academic performance outcomes as part of draft School Development Plan; combining Performance Outcomes with KPIs; and use of external measures such as surveys .

6.11 HT noted that one such survey was the annual NHS Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2017: he would bring to the School Improvement Committee.

ACTION Item 6.11

HT to bring latest NHS Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2017 to forthcoming School Improvement Committee.

6.12 HT turned to the next slide, in which “excellent learning which leads to strong outcomes” was reinforced by teaching, pastoral support and leadership, all of which supported excellent learning. This was a tried and tested model.

6.13 He rehearsed the various initiatives that were designed to strengthen and promote excellent teaching, pastoral support and leadership. These would now be circulated to subject and pastoral teams, who would identify how to act on them.

6.14 FMI thanked HT for his presentation and asked for questions, which he answered as follows.

6.15 How did the plan address Ofsted's concerns [RAU]? These had been around homework and middle leadership: both were addressed here.

6.16 Should the stress on academic progress and attainment in the monitoring of middle leaders' practice be eased [LCO]? FMI thought that governors should meet with middle leaders to promote this. HT to amend annual review cycle to include non-academic outcomes.

ACTION Item 6.16 *HT to amend middle leaders' annual review cycle to include non-academic outcomes.*

6.17 Governors praised the draft School Development Plan; GGO in particular praised it as succinct. HT to bring final version to the July FGB meeting.

ACTION Item 6.17 *HT to bring final version of the School Development Plan to July FGB meeting.*

7. Curriculum plan for Years 7-10

7.1 HT gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Years 7-10 curriculum plan, tabling it also as hard copy. MHU to circulate in digital form after meeting.

7.2 Governors had reviewed much of the content previously. The object of the plan was to make the best use of teachers teaching the subject(s) they were most qualified to teach. Key was the allocation of teaching contact time, which would not change for 2018-19.

7.3 An affordability measure had determined that the school could afford 53.2 FTE (full-time equivalent) teachers: this plan employed slightly more. Various changes included one fewer maths period in Y7 (six rather than seven) and Y9 drama – not previously taught in this year – at the expense of one fewer modern foreign languages (MFL) period.

[GGO left the meeting with apologies at 6.40pm.]

7.4 At KS4, the current MFL block plus three options would be replaced by 20 classes across four options blocks.

7.5 Timetabling all this would be difficult. HT concluded by outlining the necessary and potential changes, and their challenges and limitations.

7.6 FMI thanked HT for his presentation and asked for questions, which he answered as follows.

7.7 What was driving the new timetable [RAU]? The need to become more efficient.

7.8 Would a longer working day and shorter periods help [PKK]? Some teachers were keen to fit an extra period – the so-called “period 6” – at the end of the day, partly to provide facilities for independent study for students who struggled with it at home.

7.9 That was still an option. However, anything more than that would throw William Ellis out of kilter with other LaSWAP schools, even if changes were limited to Years 7-11. It would also mean extending staff working hours, though there were members of staff who were commendably enthusiastic at that prospect.

ACTION Item 7.9 *HT to review option of adding "period 6" to school day.*

7.10 What was the greatest risk [CGE]? Being able to timetable everything: not enough staff, who were necessarily teaching broader attainment groups.

7.11 LCO thought that another risk was lack of flexibility, for instance if a student fell out with a teacher. They would have nowhere to go.

7.12 Would HT review the new timetable during the course of its implementation, and when would he know whether it had worked [FMI]? Certainly it would be reviewed: it would become obvious by the end of the autumn term whether it was working or not. He would report back to governors at the January 2019 FGB meeting.

ACTION Item 7.12 *HT to report back to January FGB meeting on success or otherwise of implementing new timetable.*

8. Staffing update

8.1 HT noted that he had provided a full report on staffing to the recent Personnel and Resources Committee meeting. Since then, a head of art, craft and design had been appointed.

8.2 In fact, the school had appointed to all vacancies except one (in science) and he was very happy with the appointments. The quality of applicants, to fill vacancies left by the departure of key people at the end of the school year, had picked up after a stuttering start.

8.3 FMI said that it was to HT and the school's credit that it would be fully staffed in September 2019 with some excellent people.

8.4 HT added that he intended to make two internal appointments.

8.5 The first was a permanent role to lead on the school's provision for its 10-20 per cent of vulnerable students, replacing the current temporary lead practitioner (pastoral). Current heads of year were expected to apply.

8.6 The second was a director of sixth form on a one-year contract, to forge closer ties with Parliament Hill and lead a move into the new LaSWAP building. The school would work with Parliament Hill on the nature of the subsequent, permanent role.

8.7 While on the subject of joint working, FMI added that she had tentatively agreed to a joint governors' meeting with Parliament Hill in the spring of 2019.

9. Reports from committees

9.1 Personnel and Resources Committee RAU, who chairs this committee, reported that it had met on 10 May 2018; draft minutes were not yet ready for circulation. The committee had considered the 2018-19 budget, staffing and the building project. HT noted that the latter was on schedule, but its priority meant that the school was limited in the improvements it could make on the premises elsewhere. RAU praised the professionalism of Camden's construction contractor, Farrans.

9.2 School Improvement Committee LEM, who chairs this committee, reported that it had met on 3 May 2018; draft minutes had been circulated. The committee had discussed the proposed online learning platform for homework; received reports on student progress, with some concerns about English; and considered attendance data: FMI added here that she would continue to serve on attendance panels, the last step before families were threatened with fines. All governors were warmly invited to attend a Tuesday 17 July (3.45pm-4.45pm) "professional development presentation" of research projects by an astonishing 55 staff.

10. Review policies and other documents

Medical Needs Policy HT reminded governors that this policy had been comprehensively reviewed by the Personnel and Resources Committee; however, it was a statutory policy so needed to be agreed by the FGB. Governors **AGREED** it.

11. Any other business

11.1 Uganda trip PKK announced that this July, with head of Years 12 and 13 Andrew Mangham, she would be leading a group of 10-14 self-funded William Ellis students on a trip to Uganda, in partnership with a charity called The Great Generation.

11.1.1 Every year, William Ellis students taught in rural Ugandan primary schools, worked on allotments, helped to design and build playground facilities, and worked with HIV-positive children.

11.1.2 Before departure, the students raised money to buy goats, which cost £30-£40 each, and took a small library of donated books. She asked governors to consider contributing, either in cash or in kind (books). Some of the children encountered had never seen a book in their lives.

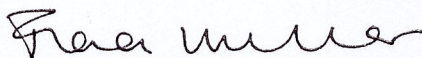
ACTION Item 11.1.2 *All governors to consider contributing to purchase of William Ellis-sponsored goats for Uganda and donating books for Great Generation students to take there.*

11.2 Books for William Ellis library Still on books, SSK urged governors to respond to a WESPA plea for specific titles for the school library: MHU to circulate details.

ACTION Item 11.2 *All governors to consider responding to WESPA plea for specific titles for the school library.*

Next scheduled meeting: Thursday 5 July 2018 at 10.30am at The Mill.

There being no further business in this part of the meeting, FMI thanked all present for attending and closed this part of the meeting at 7.05pm. AAH, LCO, PKK and RWH left the meeting at this point. Confidential items followed.

Signed..........

5 July 2018

Fiona Millar
Chair of the Governing Body, William Ellis School

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES

- ACTION Item 2.2** **FMI and HT** to meet all the students invited to attend attendance panels again, in a month's time.
- ACTION Item 3.2** **HT** to ask IJO organise governor focus group on homework.
- ACTION Item 3.3** **HT** to ask IJO to investigate availability of online lead practitioner CPD.
- ACTION Item 6.1** **MHU** to circulate digital copy of draft School Development Plan.
- ACTION Item 6.10** **HT** to consider non-academic performance outcomes as part of draft School Development Plan; combining Performance Outcomes with KPIs; and use of external measures such as surveys .
- ACTION Item 6.11** **HT** to bring latest NHS Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2017 to forthcoming School Improvement Committee.
- ACTION Item 6.16** **HT** to amend middle leaders' annual review cycle to include non-academic outcomes.
- ACTION Item 6.17** **HT** to bring final version of the School Development Plan to July FGB meeting.
- ACTION Item 7.9** **HT** to review option of adding "period 6" to school day.
- ACTION Item 7.12** **HT** to report back to January FGB meeting on success or otherwise of implementing new timetable.
- ACTION Item 11.1.2** **All governors** to consider contributing to purchase of William Ellis-sponsored goats for Uganda and donating books for Great Generation students to take there.
- ACTION Item 11.2** **All governors** to consider responding to WESPA plea for specific titles for the school library.