

WILLIAM ELLIS SCHOOL



MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY held at The Mill on Thursday 5 July 2018

MINUTES

GOVERNORS			Present
Headteacher	Mr Sam White (HT)		✓
LA	Ms Georgia Gould (GGO)		x
Elected parent	Ms Imogen Sharp (ISH)		✓
Elected staff	Mr Richard Whitenstall (RWH)		✓
Foundation	Mr Richard Ault (RAU)		✓
	Ms Ronke Coote		x
	Dame Karen Dunnell (KDU)		x
	Dr Lee Elliot-Major (LEM)		x
	Prof Conor Gearty (CGE) Vice chair		x
	Mr Omar Harmon (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)		x
ASSOCIATE			
	Mr Abdi Ahmed (AAH)		x
ATTENDING			
	Mr Mike Hutchinson (MHU) Clerk		

1. Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

FMI welcomed everyone to this FGB meeting, which began at 11.38am at The Mill, the school's outward bound centre in the Surrey Hills. Apologies were received from, and permission for absence granted to, KDU, LEM, CGE and PKK. There were no apologies from AAH, RCO or GGO. A quorum was present. 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

2.1 Camden Governors' Conference FMI reported that she had attended the recent Camden Governors' Conference, at which the lead speaker – Ofsted's senior inspector in London, Mark Phillips – had praised William Ellis, albeit anonymously. It validated the school's approach to a wider curriculum and enrichment.

2.2 Governor vacancies FMI noted that the terms of office of RCO and Jonny Woolf (JWO – a parent governor) had recently expired. RCO had been re-appointed as a Foundation governor. FMI thanked LCO for her service as a co-opted, and previously staff, governor: she would be stepping down when she took a career break at the end of term, after more than 12 years teaching at the school. Governors **AGREED** to co-opt JWO in her place, effective as of 26 July 2018.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

3.1 The minutes of the meeting of 17 May 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 2.2 FMI and HT had not, in the event, met all the students invited to attendance panels as some of the issues involved had resolved or been dealt with in other ways.

3.3 Item 3.2 FMI reported that she, KDU, CGE and ISH had formed a governor focus group on homework and attendance. Governors had interviewed two groups of staff – six staff in all – and two groups of students – seven students in total. Written reports would follow in September. HT thought that seeking the views of staff and students independently in this way had been very useful.

3.4 Item 3.3 HT reported that CPD (continuous professional development) was no longer in such demand for lead practitioners as there were fewer of them, and in any case, the school was exploring the NPQSL (National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership) and other routes to professional development instead.

3.5 Item 7.7 HT had reviewed the option of adding a "period 6" to the school day as part of managing homework clubs. However, given that it affected teachers' terms and conditions, it would need consultation, so would not happen overnight and, in any case, was probably unaffordable. Some twilight sixth form lessons and homework clubs were already planned. Next year's Y11 would be provided with a temporary study room thanks to various moves due to the building programme.

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

4. Headteacher's report

4.1 FMI invited HT to introduce his report, which he did briefly, noting that it included student progress in Years 7-11 and the sixth form, and reports from the school's team leaders. These were positive and heartening, with clear priorities for Improvement.

4.2 However, two team leaders had highlighted pressures on their teams: in music (financial) and English (capacity). The library also needed monitoring. All departments had received hefty cuts to their financial allocations over past two years; the school was cutting things it did not want to cut.

4.3 Music, for instance, was supported financially by the school's trustees, the Pupil Premium and WESPA (William Ellis School Parents' Association).

4.4 That said, there were successes. Of 130 Y9 boys, 110 had attended a compulsory camp, though that number could be higher. William Ellis was proud to have become the most compliant school in the LaSWAP sixth form consortium this year, which meant that it was consistently the first school to submit reports and data.

4.5 FMI thanked HT for his comments and asked for questions, of which she asked the first.

4.6 Could team leaders report in a standardised format so that, for instance, they all referenced attendance [FMI]? HT acknowledged that on this occasion, the format had been loose: in future, draft reports would be previewed for consistency.

4.6.1 ISH agreed that, as attendance was a whole-school priority, everyone should address it. FMI wanted to keep an element of autonomy for teachers in their reporting but within a range of consistency. LCO pointed out that teachers were keen to share their successes, including in boosting attendance.

4.6.2 RWH advised that the Y10 head of year had taken a hard line on attendance and behaviour in exams, to excellent effect. HT pointed out that two heads of year would temporarily share responsibility for Years 9, 10 and 11 next year, with clear systems and processes for managing attendance and behaviour.

4.7 Given the comments of the team leader for drama and dance – that it was swimming against a tide of increasingly narrow academic provision – did the subject have a future in the curriculum [DMO]? HT agreed that this concern was valid. Class sizes were up and there was more academic pressure than ever. But drama absolutely had a place in the curriculum, and had in fact been expanded to Y9, though there were some worries that the demands of the course meant that it could become just another academic subject with which some boys could struggle.

4.7.1 LCO thought fewer students were opting to regularly attend after-school activities, although she was not clear why.

4.7.2 FMI thought that “co-curricular” subjects – as suggested by DMO, and to include the performing arts – would be a good topic for governor focus. Non-academic outcomes remained important. She and HT to discuss.

ACTION Item 4.7.2 FMI and HT to discuss governor focus on “co-curricular” subjects.

4.8 Was the school roll healthy enough [FMI]? HT noted that September 2018's new Y7 would be full.

4.9 Was current student mobility of concern [FMI]? It was not abnormal.

4.10 FMI thanked HT again for his report, noting that its tone was more upbeat than for some time, and for answering questions.

5. School Development Plan 2018-19

5.1 HT reminded governors that this document was in effect never finalised but continually refined; the process was the important thing. He highlighted a list of KPIs (key performance indicators), and that participation in camps was now included as a measure of resilience. Governor panels to monitor Student Voice and Teacher Voice would be an important development.

5.2 Of the three sections, that on teaching and learning was the most important, ahead of pastoral issues and leadership.

5.3 Teaching and learning Middle leaders had on the previous day discussed homework and growth mindset and agreed that the school had lost focus on the latter. The aim was to help students – and their parents – appreciate what characteristics were needed to thrive in the world. The school needed to do more to help students develop grit, perseverance, resilience and a responsibility for themselves.

5.3.1 Where in the plan was the value of non-academic activities, such as attendance at extra-curricular activities, measured [FMI]? This was difficult to measure, and would need extra resources, although participation in outward bound camps could be added. Student Voice would be informative here.

5.3.2 Could numbers of events and trips be listed [DMO]? Possibly, although that would not highlight, for instance, students at risk of failing to attend.

5.3.3 Were extra-curricular activities promoted at parents' evenings [DMO]? HT said that the focus was more on academic issues. SSK recalled that Y7 students at Parliament Hill delivered PowerPoint presentations on their achievements and areas for development to their parents and a member of staff – not necessarily one they knew; HT noted this with interest.

5.3.4 HT noted that key priorities for teaching and learning included homework and oracy.

5.4 Pastoral care HT noted that PHSE (personal, social and health education) had been on the school's curriculum for a year now. Despite some initial anxiety, it was going well, although there was more to be done. Students were positive.

5.4.1 Separately, parents were understandably concerned about their children's safety beyond the school gates.

5.4.2 The tutorial programme needed more development, with more focus on careers and citizenship, including regular attendance at school.

5.5 Leadership More work was still needed on specific roles and responsibilities, and possibly line management arrangements.

5.5.1 What were staff objectives this year [ISH]? These would be set by 28 September, and consist of three per person: one pastoral, one concerned with teaching and learning, and one individual. The Personnel and Resources Committee would receive a report on appraisals in November.

5.5.2 FMI noted that when student attendance had been included in staff objectives it had risen; when it was subsequently removed, it had plateaued. HT noted that the 2012 initiative concerned had been prompted by particularly poor whole-school attendance of 90 per cent.

5.5.3 One key area of leadership which was at risk was the programme for outdoor learning, such as the Y9 camp, where key staff were leaving; they had to be replaced.

5.5.4 Staff self-evaluation had been set back following the Ofsted inspection but would be refocused this year. FMI said that governors would continue to hold termly focus groups with students, staff and parents, linked thematically with the plan.

5.5.5 HT informed governors that the results of teachers' disciplined enquiries – pedagogical research projects – would be on show at the school on Tuesday 17 July, from 3.45pm to 4.45pm. They were invited to attend.

5.6 HT promised to return with an updated SDP to the next FGB meeting.

ACTION Item 5.6 HT to return with updated SDP to next FGB meeting.

6. Staffing update

With the exception of a science teacher, all necessary teaching staff were in place for September 2018. Various support staff matters were due to be resolved.

7. Reports from committees

7.1 School Improvement Committee FMI, who chaired this committee on this occasion, reported that it had met on 21 June 2018; draft minutes were not yet available for circulation. The committee had discussed attendance, year group progress, and health and wellbeing.

7.2 Personnel and Resources Committee RAU, who chairs this committee, reported that it had met on 28 June 2018; draft minutes were not yet available for circulation. The committee had discussed the building works, the budget (with its in-year deficit), fundraising, and ways to boost the roll.

7.3 Independent Learning Working Party A written report would be presented to the September FGB meeting.

8. Receive reports on governor activity

8.1 Visits FMI and ISH had visited the school for the governor focus group on homework.

8.2 Development FMI asked HT to organise Camden training on safeguarding as part of the 29 November FGB meeting.

ACTION	Item 8.2	<i>HT to organise Camden training on safeguarding as part of 29 November FGB meeting.</i>
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8.3 HT noted that governors would have new responsibilities for the oversight of school provision of CEIAG (careers education, information, advice and guidance) from September 2018: training might be a good idea soon afterwards. RWH to be link governor for CEIAG. MHU to add briefing on the Gatsby benchmarks for schools' CEIAG provision to agenda of next FGB meeting.

ACTION	Item 8.3	<i>MHU to add briefing on Gatsby benchmarks for schools' CEIAG provision to agenda of next FGB meeting.</i>
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8.4 FMI reported that Camden secondary chairs now met regularly as a group.

9. Appoint clerk for 2018-19

Governors **AGREED** to reappoint MHU as clerk for 2018-19.

10. Elect chair and vice chair for 2018-19

Given the lateness of the hour and the number of apologies given for the meeting, this item was deferred to the next FGB meeting.

11. Appoint members and chairs of committees

Given the lateness of the hour and the number of apologies given for the meeting, this item was deferred to the next FGB meeting.

12. Approve protocols

12.1 Delegation of approval of policies Governors **AGREED** that all policies should be approved at committee if possible or delegated to an individual or the headteacher if guidance permitted and the committee wished.

12.2 Naming of governors in minutes Governors **AGREED** that they should be named in minutes as a matter of course, but that any governor who wished should have the right to have their contribution anonymised.

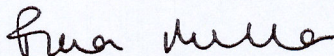
12.3 Remote attendance Governors **AGREED** that this should be at the discretion of the chair of the appropriate body (FGB, committees, etc); governors so attending to count towards the quorum.

13. Any other business

There was no other business in this part of the meeting.

Next scheduled meeting: Thursday 11 October 2018 at 5pm

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 12.57pm. Confidential items followed.

Signed.....

11 October 2018

Fiona Millar
Chair of the Governing Body, William Ellis School

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES

ACTION	Item 4.8	<i>FMI and HT to discuss governor focus on "co-curricular" subjects.</i>
ACTION	Item 5.6	<i>HT to return with updated SDP to next FGB meeting.</i>
ACTION	Item 8.2	<i>HT to organise Camden training on safeguarding as part of 29 November FGB meeting.</i>
ACTION	Item 8.3	<i>MHU to add briefing on Gatsby benchmarks for schools' CEIAG provision to agenda of next FGB meeting.</i>