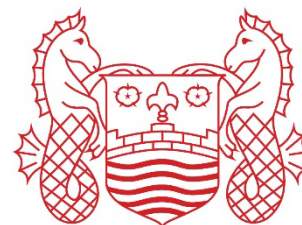


The Netherhall School and Oakes College Local Governing Body Meeting Minutes



30 November 2023 in IT Boardroom 6pm

Governors present

Paul Bullen-Smith (PBS Co Chair), Nicky Odgers (NO Co Chair) via Zoom, George Bucknall (GB), Noah Crew-Gee (NCG) via Zoom, Ellie Wood (EW), Claire Hunter (CH), Yair Doza (YD), Peter Monteath (PM), and Chris Tooley (Principal)

Others Present

Karim Masui, Chris Woods and Janet Goldsworthy (Clerk)

The meeting was quorate throughout.

	ITEM	ACTION
1	Acceptance of Apologies for Absence M Tamvakis (prior engagement) and E Winchester (unavailable)	
2	Declarations of Interest with regard to agenda items None and no changes.	
3.	Agree minutes of last meeting and matters arising not on this agenda The minutes of 04.10.2023 were approved with a minor amendment relating to the absence of E Winchester.	
4.	Principal's report including review of key risks, admissions arrangements and update on complaints and whistleblowing Key points of note:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school continues to grow as numbers on roll increase and waiting lists exist for all year groups. There is constant churn of pupils with 65 students leaving and 65 students joining last year, with a general move towards international applications. Behaviour continues to improve year on year Attendance has increased slightly which is encouraging given the numbers of international students and the fact that students attending Alvin must all be recorded as having zero attendance. PP students make up 30% of the total cohort. <p>Q What interventions are causing attendance to increase? A Tutors are having a significant impact when they work on a 1-1 basis with pupils and work with their parents.</p> <p>Q What is the unauthorised absence rate? A This has not been reported but is relatively low.</p> <p>Q What is PA? A PA stands for Persistent Absence. The average child has 1 day off each fortnight. Since covid, parents are more accepting of keeping children at home.</p> <p>Q What is parents understanding of the process to follow when their child is unwell. A The Chief Medical Officer, Chris Witty, has written to parents to encourage parents to send their children into school if they have a cough or cold as long as they do not have a temperature. The LA are to send a further letter to parents confirming this.</p>	

	<p>Q What does UTC stand for? A University Technical College</p> <p>Q Why is there a 5 percentage point difference between Year 7 and Year 11 absence rates? A Older students have more mental health issues and involvement with county lines.</p> <p>Q What is the absence rate amongst those students with EHCPs? A The number of students with EHCPs is quite low (39) so not statistically relevant.</p> <p><u>Staffing:-</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been many staffing changes. • There is still a vacancy for Had of English from September next year. • There has been some success in recruiting a part time science teacher, a computer science teacher and an English teacher. • Recruitment is challenging and sickness has also been affecting staffing. <p>Q Is the trust supporting with recruitment? A The trust is creating attractive advertisements but this hasn't resulted in any increase in applications.</p> <p>Q Are there any areas of the country having success with recruitment? A It appears not. Techer training places are also reducing. The introduction of the compulsory teaching of Maths up to the age of 18 will also provide challenge.</p> <p><u>Complaints:-</u> There has been only one complaint which was resolved informally at stage 1 of the process.</p> <p>Admissions arrangements:- There have been no changes to admissions arrangements.</p> <p><u>Finances:-</u> The budget is tight until September 2024 and there is a constant rebalancing when there are any changes to the budget due to recruitment, cost of supply etc. This means that the flexibility within the system is minimal.</p> <p>Q What has happened with regards to the person employed as administrator for EHCPs? A The person joined full time but then due to personal circumstances had to reduce this to working 3 days each week from home. This seems to be working well so far. There is an increasing number of staff working form home where this is feasible which sometimes results in increased productivity.</p> <p>Q How many students are currently on roll? A1234 with 23% SEN.</p> <p>Q What is contained in the SEN handbook? A This explains the structure of the department, the types of SEN support available and the individual learning plan for each SEN pupil. The focus for staff is to know their students and move increasingly towards personalised learning.</p>	
5.	Review of AIP 2022-2023 and update on strategy for 2023-2024	
	<p>A one page AIP strategy has been produced but the details is in the underlying documents. A key focus will be the improvement in how students with ADHD and ASC are taught and the development of expertise in these areas. Dan Berry will be leading on this.</p>	

6.	AIP review 1c 'Support wellbeing through full life strategy'	
	<p>There has been good progress in the strand of the strategy and staff are working to use the data to support students better.</p> <p>Q What are the baselines? A Baselines have replaced the Tranquiliti app and various interventions are being delivered in response to the data provided by the app eg. Assemblies, surveys etc Further development work is required to enable the school to take the temperature of the pupils with regard to their mental health.</p> <p>Q Were the questions produced by the pupils? A Yes – from PSHCE and various assemblies</p> <p>HE had completed a safeguarding visit to the school and the committee had received a report on the visit and was debriefed at the meeting. Recommendations from the visit will be considered when introducing new initiatives in school.</p> <p>Q How are we supporting staff wellbeing with increasing numbers of child protection issues and increasing complexity of cases? A The SLT is very supportive of each other and do not work in isolation but work as a team. Pinch points do exist in relation to some administrative safeguarding processes and as a result, some structural changes are being introduced with appropriate training and impact on decision making.</p>	
7.	Safeguarding update	
	<p>KM had provided governors with a report which was distributed prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Q What has happened in response to the AL review of safeguarding? A There has been a peer review to measure the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school. This was positive and no gaps were identified. This gave the school a higher level of assurance which has been fed into the AL safeguarding blueprint. There was also a report from the Link Governor HE which was discussed. HE's recommendations were being taken up by the school</p>	
8.	Behaviour policy	
	<p>The Behaviour policy has been slimmed down from 52 to 18 pages to make it more manageable for staff to work with without reducing its effectiveness.</p> <p>MT had sent his comments to CW who would respond and copy in all governors.</p> <p>School visitors are commenting on the improved behaviour within the school. Success is thought to be due to the clarity of the policy and the clear stages of the process.</p> <p>Q Is there any de-escalation built in at Stage 3? A Staff are encouraged to stay calm and explain the process to pupils without emotion.</p> <p>Q What is the process if the member of staff hasn't been able to have this conversation with a pupil for whatever reason between stages 3 and 4? Is it the case that a pupil should not be allowed to return to lessons? A This is preferential but may not always be the case, dependant on the circumstances. As a result of the process, the number of stage 4 cases has been vastly reduced.</p> <p>Q What happens in the case of 'out of lesson' behaviour?</p>	CW

	A The teacher is encouraged to follow up the issue on the spot. If this isn't possible, then an email should be sent to the pastoral office to follow up.	
9.	Review of suspension data	
	<p>Governors had received a copy of the behaviour policy prior to the meeting. The policy includes a change to exclusions whereby the school works more closely with students and parents to resolve any issues. When a pupil is not meeting expectations, the parent is contacted and brought into school to discuss a way forward for that student. This approach, whilst quite labour intensive, keeps children in school more often. There are still suspensions and on these occasions, work is set for the child at home who is monitored closely. The school believes strongly that suspensions do not serve any purpose other than is there is a safeguarding issue. Parents are more supportive when they feel that the school is working with and not against them.</p> <p>Governors felt that this success in reducing suspensions was very exciting.</p> <p>Q What is the school doing during the suspension? A Staff have time to reflect and create a plan of action for the student's return. Staff work with students in school on a project basis to reflect on the incident and think about the impact on other students. Students are allowed back in lessons only when staff are confident that the student has learned from the suspension. This approach is proving to be very successful. Communication with parents seems to be key.</p> <p>Q What is the time investment on the part of staff? A On one hand, the time required is increased but on the other hand, the time taken for re-admission meetings is reduced. There have been 6 suspensions this year compared to 56 at this time last year. The impact of the new policy on re-offending is much improved and the understanding of students of the behaviour expectations is also improving.</p>	
10.	Governance items	
	<p><u>AGF feedback</u> The trust has a new mission statement which was circulated to governors. There is a new schedule of delegation which is a fluid document. AL feels that LGBs have a value as stakeholders' representatives.</p> <p><u>Governor training</u> There is induction training for new governors at Bottisham College from 6 until 7.30pm on 23.01.2024.</p> <p><u>Governor recruitment update</u> There has not yet been any response to the request for parent governors in the school newsletter. NO and PBS met with a potential trust governor and governors agreed to proceed with her application and to take up references.</p> <p><u>Register of business interests 2023-2024 and attendance register 2022-2023</u> JG asked all governors to check the accuracy of their entries and let her know if there are any required amendments.</p>	ALL

11.	Reasons to be cheerful	
	Teaching staff have been contributing to the new library by recommending books they themselves have enjoyed and adding them to a reading list available for students to access.	
12.	AOB	
	None	
13.	Date, time and venue for next meeting	
	13 th February 2024 6pm 2023 IT board room	

The meeting closed at 20.05.

Items for Future Meetings	
Meeting	Item

Action Log			
ITEM	ACTION	DEADLINE	RESPONSIBILITY
8	Respond to MT comments by email and copy in all governors	December 2023	CW
10	Review Register of Business Interests and Attendance Register and inform JG of any required amendments	December 2023	ALL

Rolling Action Log			
ACTION	DEADLINE	RESPONSIBILITY	UPDATE
Share results of skills audit with NO and PBS	ASAP	JG	Completed October 2023
Email Jim Hill amendment to RSE policy	ASAP	JG	Completed October 2023
Add link governor reports to agenda planner	ASAP	JG	Still to be completed