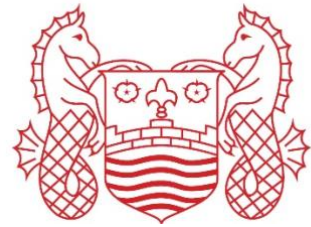


# The Netherhall School and Oakes College Local Governing Body Meeting Minutes



26.11.2024 in IT Boardroom 6pm

## Governors present

Chris Tooley (CT), Paul Bullen-Smith (PBS Co Chair), Nicky Odgers (NO Co Chair), George Bucknall (GB), Yair Doza (YD), Peter Monteath (PM), Lauren Shields (LS) and Ambili Nair (AN).

## Others Present

Tom Hunter (TH) and Janet Goldsworthy (GP)

The meeting was quorate throughout.

	ITEM	ACTION
1	<b>Acceptance of Apologies for Absence</b>	
	Apologies – Heather Edwards – accepted by all those present. Rob Syposz was due to present items 4 and 5 but had to leave the meeting due to a family matter.	
2	<b>Declarations of Interest with regard to agenda items</b>	
	None and no changes.	
3.	<b>Minutes of last meeting and matters arising</b>	
	The minutes of the LGB meeting on 09.10.2024 were approved with the exception of a change to the wording of item 6 to 'the rewards for improvement in attendance could be considered alongside rewarding achievement for attendance'.	
4.	<b>Achievement outcomes for Oakes College 6<sup>th</sup> form</b>	
	<p>RS had circulated a report prior to the meeting regarding the outcomes and results for the Oakes College. The committee had a number of questions.</p> <p>Q Does the school feel that there is an attitude issue amongst some students whose approach is that they avoid getting stressed by not trying? A There seems to have been a 'tipping point' over the Summer when students were not open to encouragement to use free periods to make progress. In addition, those more sociable students negatively influenced others. The school is working hard to combat these attitudes using a trial and error approach to understand what needs to be different around teaching in KS5 as opposed to the other key stages.</p> <p>Q Is KS5 pedagogy an issue? A Again, the school is trying to identify what strategies need to be used to continue to motivate students and how these strategies can be tweaked to produce maximum effect.</p> <p>Q Does the school follow its admission for entry guidelines strictly? A The focus is on the individual so students may be accepted into the 6<sup>th</sup> form even if they are at the lower end of the entry guidelines with the intention of 'giving them the chance'. However, progression is still important as universities continue to request higher grades for entry. The question remains as to whether there should be no exceptions to the entry criteria even if this means lower numbers entering the 6<sup>th</sup> form.</p> <p>Q Is the priority exam success or student wellbeing? A Again this is a discussion point. The recruitment of a new member of staff to the 6<sup>th</sup> form team will allow SLT more opportunity to lead a growing 6<sup>th</sup> form, to develop strategies for independent learning and to investigate new subject combinations which aim to appeal to those students preferring a small nurturing environment.</p>	
5.	<b>Admissions policy</b>	
	<p>RS had distributed the Admissions Policy for governors to review prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Q There appears to be some inconsistency in the policy with one paragraph stating that 'entry to the college is not determined by interview' then the next paragraph mentioning that there will be an interview? A Students do meet with a member of staff prior to being offered a place in the 6<sup>th</sup> form but this is more of a guidance interview so that staff can gain a better understanding of</p>	

	<p>the student, their subject choices and their suitability. The policy wording will be changed to reflect this stating 'Students will be invited to attend a guidance meeting.....'</p> <p>Q The policy stated that certain grades are 'preferable' to study Politics but 'required' to study Law. Is this deliberate? A Yes</p> <p>The Admissions Policy was approved by governors subject to the revised wording above.</p>	<b>RS</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Complaints and Whistleblowing report/ Attendance and Suspension report</b>	
	<p>CT stated that there were no complaints or incidents of whistleblowing to report.</p> <p>Key points of note:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been an increase of 40 in the numbers of pupils on roll in comparison to this time last year. The school has accepted an extra form of entry for September 2025 increasing the intake from 180 to 210. This will result in 4 year groups being at the 210 level which gives a financial boost to the school.</li> <li>• PP numbers have increase from 22% to 30% over the year</li> <li>• Year 10 attendance has decreased but this is due to a small number of pupils not attending school at all. Ofsted mentioned that the school were going above and beyond to improve attendance and were satisfied that everything possible was being trialled.</li> <li>• Although the national picture is for increasing exclusions, Netherhall have reduced exclusions from 240 in 2022 to zero in 2024.</li> <li>• The approach which has led to reduced exclusions is receiving local and national attention and has been described as 'totally inspirational' be the Director of Education for Cambridge who wants to implement the same approach across the county.</li> </ul>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Safeguarding executive summary and blueprint</b>	
	<p>The school's review of safeguarding carried out by CS and AL received a very positive response and indicated that there are no areas in which the school needs to work on although there is always scope for improvement. Positive relationships have been developed and processes and procedures are embedded with greater assurance.</p> <p>Q Governor ID cards and lanyards have still not been received and there was no challenge to visitors coming in through the Sports Centre entrance. A KM has spoken with the Sports Centre Manager and visitors coming onto site should be challenged after the cut off time of 4pm. KM will speak with them again.</p> <p>Q Why did the number of safeguarding incidents spike in 2023? A At this stage, there was a change to what KCSIE said needed to be recorded as a safeguarding incident and the numbers of incidents recorded in MyConcern therefore increased.</p> <p>Q How is it communicated to students that sexualised behaviour is not be acceptable? A There is catch all provision in tutor groups and assemblies and then any individual concerns are followed up with parents.</p> <p>Q Why has the number of logs per week spiked? A The attendance team log incidents on certain dates each week.</p> <p>It was noted by governors that the decrease in sexualised incidents is encouraging.</p>	<b>KM/JG</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Bright Futures for All – Listening Campaign</b>	
	<p>This is part of the school's work to identify an improvement strategy for the next 5 years until 2030. It is also noted that KM is part of an East Cohort team working to identify the next 100 headteachers for the East of England.</p> <p>As part of the school's approach, CT and KM will engage with 25 parents, the LGB, the local community and students via a survey to ask 2 questions relating to what issues stakeholders are facing and how the school can support. The school is setting itself an ambitious target to have the largest impact on the largest group pf stakeholders possible.</p> <p>The following ideas were proposed after a period of brainstorming:-</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving attendance is important in particular for those pupils who are neurodiverse. Can we find a way to support all pupils but especially those with sensory and non-communication issues. Should we review how other students can be educated about neurodiversity s there are many misconceptions.</li> <li>• The approach to ADHD needs to be addressed. Waiting lists can be up to 4 years long to be assessed before a diagnosis is forthcoming. There are ways of supporting these pupils before a diagnosis. How can we support these pupils before crisis point in order to avoid a crisis ever happening?</li> <li>• Can we address exam anxiety? Is there a way to acknowledge the anxiety but also support pupils in coping and managing their stress – perhaps through developing resilience. On the other hand, some students may need to be more anxious about their exams and do not take this seriously enough. The school is already looking at ways to reduce stress by reducing the number of options taken from 4 to 3 which will increase the time available for the other subjects. ‘The Resilience Model’ was mentioned as a useful resource.</li> <li>• The school acting as a community hub is a strength which should be further developed, perhaps by involving other stakeholders?</li> <li>• How can the school engage with primary feeder schools and support primaries who are struggling through lack of funding. Can the school offer any TA support?</li> <li>• Sustainability is a key focus for schools as it is the pupils who will be forced to deliver on this in years to come. Should there be a sustainability lead to involve and educate students?</li> <li>• The idea of student shapers was discussed where a member of staff collaborates with a student on a project of their choosing to develop leadership skills. Distributed leadership amongst pupils was an idea.</li> <li>• Does the school's 5 year plan need to integrate with the AL strategy of ‘belonging’ or is Netherhall’s relational approach already covering this angle?</li> <li>• There was some discussion that the questions being put to stakeholders could be seen as being outside the remit of what a school should be providing? Others felt that addressing these issues could get to the root of how to better support and therefore educate pupils.</li> <li>• Is there scope for pupils to support each other outside of class? Eg Doing homework collaboratively?</li> <li>• School Farm</li> <li>• More communication with local businesses</li> <li>• Replace Surestart centres</li> </ul> <p>Governors should email KM with any further thoughts or ideas</p>	<b>NO</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
	None	
<b>10</b>	<b>Date and time of next meeting</b>	
	29 <sup>th</sup> January 20 <sup>th</sup> March 13 <sup>th</sup> May 2 <sup>nd</sup> July	

The meeting concluded at 20.10pm.

Items for Future Meetings	
Meeting	Item
LGB	Educational Visits policy to be approved in Spring Term 2025 SEND statement and information report to be approved in the Spring Term 2025

Action Log			
ITEM	ACTION	DEADLINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5	Amend Admissions Policy and publish	December 2024	RS
7	Speak again with Sports Centre Manager regarding safeguarding challenge	December 2025	KM
7	Follow up governor ID cards and lanyards	December 2025	JG
8	Email KM re 'The Resilience Model'	December 2025	NO

Rolling Action Log			
ACTION	DEADLINE	RESPONSIBILITY	UPDATE
Approve safeguarding visit form	October 2024	KM	Completed Autumn 2024
Email governors regarding governance items	October 2024	PBS	Completed Autumn 2024

APPROVED