

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE GOVERNING BODY OF WALTHAMSTOW SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
HELD ON 28TH MARCH 2023 AT 6.30PM AT THE SCHOOL**

Present: Gillian Barker (Chair) Co-opted Governor

Co-opted Governors

Hannah Cheston *online*
Andrea Corbett

Headteacher

Helen Marriott

Parent Governors

Sami Urrehman *online*
Pete Saunders
Mari Paz Balibrea *online*
Rukaiya Moola

Clerk to the Governors/Trustees: Neil Taylor

Also present: Nick O'Brien (Deputy Headteacher)
Romi Jalil (Business Manager)

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
4.6	Teaching School Hub Panel needed to be added to the Committee list.	Chair	a.s.a.p
5.18	Student Voice – toilets: send a summary report to governors.	Headteacher	a.s.a.p
6.1	Report to WF Governor Services any omissions in their training record on GovernorHub	All governors	a.s.a.p
6.2	Skills audit: share the anonymised comments in the summary and development needs	Chair & Headteacher	16/5/2023
7.14	Safeguarding Link Governor report to be presented to the next FGB meeting	Edyta Ballantyne & WFGS	16/5/2023
7.15	An additional report Safeguarding Report to be presented at the July FGB meeting following the Safeguarding Review	Edyta Ballantyne & WFGS	11/7/2023

10.3	Agreed: to adopt the Waltham Forest term dates, except the last day of the autumn term would be 22 nd December 2023 (rather than 21 st December 2023) and the last day of the summer term would be 19 th July 2024 (rather than 24 th July 2024).		
11.9	Agreed: Lead Practitioner proposal		
15.5	The Headteacher's performance objectives to be sent to governors.	Chair	a.s.a.p
16.1	Date of next meeting: 16 May 2023 at 6.30pm at the school	All / WFGS	16/5/2023
	Agenda items for next meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Link Governor Report • Skills Audit – development needs 	WFGS	16/5/2023

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Lucy Kallen, Aktar Beg and Ronnie Simpson.
- 1.3 Edyta Ballantyne and Marlene Service were not present. No were apologies received from them.
- 1.4 It was noted that the meeting was quorate, with 8 governors present.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 The register of interests was **received**.
- 2.2 There were no declarations made pertaining to any of the agenda items for this meeting, apart from Helen Marriott declaring an interest as the Headteacher.

3. GOVERNING BODY

- 3.1 The Chair confirmed that she had interviewed Meg Webster as a potential Co-opted Governor. An application had been received from another potential governor as well.
- 3.2 The Clerk confirmed that there were currently two Co-opted Governor vacancies.
- 3.3 The Clerk reported that Sami Urrehman's term of office as Parent Governor was due to end on 9th May 2023.

4. MINUTES

- 4.1 Governors received the minutes of the governing body meeting held on 6th December 2022 and agreed these to be an accurate record of the meeting, subject to a correction: minute 5.1.12, line 2, delete the word 'e'. The Headteacher also clarified that there had been two incidents, one involving 7 pupils, the other involving 2 pupils.
- 4.2 Matters arising:
There were no outstanding action points or matters arising other than those which were already on the agenda.
- 4.3 *Curriculum Committee held on 17th January 2023*
It was noted that Latin was already taught at KS3, however leaders were looking at further broadening the KS3 provision.

4.4 *Resources Committee held on 14th March*

These minutes had only been received on 27th March, and so were deferred to the next Governing Body meeting.

4.5 Committee Membership

It was **agreed** that Andrea Corbett and Marlene Service would join the Curriculum Committee; Aktar Beg would join Resources Committee.

4.6 It was noted that the Teaching School Hub Panel needed to be added to the Committee list. **Action: Chair**

5. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

5.1 Governors received the report which had been circulated in advance.

Home Education Elections

5.2 The Headteacher reported that there had been 3 elections for home education. One was in respect of a Year 9, who had been suspended following allegations made about her by other students; another was in respect of a Year 10, who had struggled with attendance and with a significant degree of anxiety; the third was in respect of a Year 11, whose parents felt that she was becoming stressed because of exams, and where there had been MASH and SEND panel referrals which had resulted in no further action.

5.3 **A governor asked if the school needed to continue providing resources for them.** The Headteacher said not once the students were off roll.

Attendance

5.4 The Headteacher reported that attendance was up slightly on the same time period in the previous year. The rate had improved further since the report had been written. It compared favourably with the national attendance figure of 90.9%.

5.5 **The Chair asked about the apparent increase in unauthorised absence.** The Headteacher said that, in Year 9 especially, there had been an increase in unauthorised holidays. Additionally, the borough required unspecified illnesses to be coded as 'unauthorised'.

5.6 The Deputy Headteacher said that, nationally, persistent absence was in double figures, whereas the WSfG figure was lower than this. However, further decreasing the persistent absence figure would take time.

5.7 **A governor asked if absences tended to be prolonged or short.** The Headteacher said that it varied.

5.8 **A governor asked if it would be possible to record which kind of sickness absences were prevalent.** The Headteacher said that this could be done, but would be a big job, administratively.

Curriculum Intent & Learning Journeys

- 5.9 The Headteacher reported that 2 days off-site were being organised for each department during the summer term to allow time for curriculum planning.

Teaching & Learning

- 5.10 The Headteacher reported that faculty reviews had taken place in English and IT. The MFL review was ongoing. Reviews for Performing Arts and Art, Design and Technology would take place after Easter.
- 5.11 The Headteacher said that exam analysis meetings had taken place prior to February half-term, following the mock examinations. Staff were looking productively at key 'converters' in each subject area.
- 5.12 The Headteacher reported that the outcomes of the spring term lesson observations had been delayed. This was due to a training exercise having taken place, involving paired observations with senior and middle leaders. This should ensure more meaningful data and consistency of practice.
- 5.13 The Headteacher said that the Pupil Premium Progress Enquiry had been completed. There was a short report provided.

CPD

- 5.14 The Headteacher reported that case studies were being completed by each member of staff on the impact of their CPD on individual students. Examples would be shared with governors in due course.

Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions

- 5.15 The Headteacher reported that the current figure was lower than the corresponding figure from 12 months previously. It was still higher than she would have liked. All except one of the students were on a pastoral support plan, to ensure that the school was meeting their needs.

Student Voice

- 5.16 The Headteacher said that a student SLT had been established during the autumn term. They would be meeting next with the Business Manager to discuss the catering service.
- 5.17 The Headteacher said that previous concerns had been raised about toilets, but students had offered solutions too. They conducted toilet checks. They had also delivered assemblies on the new school vision and values.
- 5.18 A governor asked about the toilets. The Headteacher said that concerns had been articulated in a focus group. Some students had said that they were scared in case anyone could look under the door. This appeared to be a fear acquired from social

media, as there had been no such incidents within school. The Headteacher said that she would send a summary report after the meeting. **Action: Headteacher**

Safeguarding

- 5.19 The Headteacher reported that regular safeguarding scenarios were flagged to staff to supplement the termly safeguarding training. A further external safeguarding review would be undertaken in May this year. Whilst feeling that progress had been made over the last couple of years, it was important to have evidence of that and an external review will help us to look at further areas for improvement

PSHE

- 5.20 A governor asked about feedback from the parent meeting. The Headteacher said that she had met with a group of parents who, in the past, had raised questions about transgender students. She had provided reassurance that the school had followed guidance from the DfE and had followed equality law. The aim was that their concerns be allayed.

Racist Incidents

- 5.21 The Headteacher highlighted 2 instances of students using racist language. Sanctions had been applied. Restorative work had also been undertaken.

Teaching School Hub Report

- 5.22 The Deputy Headteacher presented a copy of the report which was submitted to the last NELTSH Strategic Board meeting.
- 5.23 The Deputy Headteacher reported that work on delivering the Early Careers Framework was going well. Over 700 ECTs were on the books, with almost 700 mentors too. All of the cohort in year 2 were about to go across all 3 boroughs to undertake a school visit; regional sharing conferences would then happen. This would mark the end of their induction.
- 5.24 The Deputy Headteacher said that there had been excellent recruitment for the September start of the NPQ courses. All facilitators were leaders across the region.
- 5.25 **A governor asked if ECTs received mental health support during the induction programme.** The Deputy Headteacher said that ECTs had reduced timetable loads and met regularly with a mentor in school on an individual basis, as well as with a facilitator of the cluster. There was also a section in induction about managing workload.
- 5.26 The Deputy Headteacher said that the DfE had commissioned CPD in respect of SEN, EYFS and Pedagogy & Practice.
- 5.27 The Deputy Headteacher reported that the Teaching School would be the Appropriate Body for ECTs from September 2023. This was requiring careful work with the 3 local authorities covered by NELTSH.

6. GOVERNORS' TRAINING

- 6.1 The training record on GovernorHub was noted. Anyone with information missing from their record was asked to notify WFGS. **Action: ALL**
- 6.2 The summary of the Skills Audit was received. The Chair said that the anonymised comments in the summary would be shared at the next meeting or at Governors' Day once these had been reviewed. **Action: Chair and Headteacher**
- 6.3 The Chair highlighted the Governors Accreditation Programme, especially important for new governors to attend.

7. LINK GOVERNOR REPORT

- 7.1 Governors received the reports which had been circulated in advance. Some visits had taken place last term, whilst others were completed this term.

ICT Faculty

- 7.2 Sami Urrehman reported that changes within the ICT department had created a staffing resource issue. The Headteacher said that the Head of Faculty now had a full complement of teachers due to the return of a member of staff who had long-term sickness absence. A couple of non-specialists were delivering lessons.
- 7.3 Sami Urrehman said that some inconsistency had occurred because of part time staff being deployed. The Headteacher said that the faculty review had not shown that having part-time staff had affected the quality of teaching.
- 7.4 It was noted that the ICT faculty review had been undertaken by the Headteacher, not the Deputy Headteacher.

Maths Faculty

- 7.5 The Chair reported that she had met with the Head of Maths. Discussion had taken place about the benefits (and otherwise) of setting. She had also discussed SIP objectives for the area. The Head of Faculty had shared student data, and talked about both successes and areas for development. There was discussion about professional predictions and the grade boundaries for GCSEs this year. The department had been struggling with the Go 4 Schools software.
- 7.6 The Deputy Headteacher said that the software issue had now been resolved.

MFL

- 7.7 Mari Paz Balibrea reported that she had met with the new Head of Department. Discussion had involved the new GCSE specification, and phonics. It was noted that there was a plan to ensure that Latin outcomes improved. .
- 7.8 It was noted during the visit that when the Head of French resigned at the end of last year, this placed additional pressure on the Head of MFL. An appointment had now been made. There was, though, an FLA vacancy.
- 7.9 The Headteacher said that the FLA post had subsequently been filled.

Performing Arts

- 7.10 The Chair had met the Head of Faculty. She had looked at the department improvement plan and the previous year's GCSE results. The outcomes of High Prior Attainers and Pupil Premium students had been reviewed. There was discussion about curriculum delivery.
- 7.11 The Chair reported that often those choosing to study GCSE PE were good at practical activities, but found the theory quite challenging. The department is trying a different approach this year to see if that supported students more effectively.
- 7.12 The Chair reported that there had been adjustments in drama to the balance of lessons between theory and practical.
- 7.13 The Chair also reported that the faculty was providing lots of out-of-hours activities, including fixtures and performances.

Safeguarding

- 7.14 This report was deferred to the next meeting (in May) as Edyta Ballantyne was not present. **Action: Edyta Ballantyne & Governor Services**
- 7.15 It was noted that an additional report would be required at the July meeting following the Safeguarding Review. **Action: Edyta Ballantyne & Governor Services**

Science

- 7.16 Hannah Cheston reported that the Science results had been reviewed. There had been a slight drop in the number of Year 10s studying Triple Science; meanwhile a new Single Award was running for a small group who had struggled with Double Science.
- 7.17 It was reported that there had been a challenge uploading the data to Go 4 Schools.
- 7.18 The Headteacher said that the problem had now been resolved.

8. CHAIR'S ACTION

- 8.1 There was nothing to report.

9. SCHOOL CLIMATE CHARTER

- 9.1 The Headteacher reported that although the Head of Humanities was happy to be involved in the Climate Charter work, he did not have the capacity to lead it at present.
- 9.2 Pete Saunders agreed to be the Sustainability and Climate Emergency link governor.

10. SCHOOL TERM DATES

- 10.1 Governors noted the LBWF term dates for 2023-24.
- 10.2 The Headteacher reported that a staff survey had been conducted, and that there was support for breaking up on Friday 19th July 2024, with two of the days after then being disaggregated and replaced with twilight sessions, and the other day rescheduled at the end of the autumn term.
- 10.3 Governors **agreed** to adopt the Waltham Forest term dates, except the last day of the autumn term would be Friday 22nd December 2023 (rather than 21st December 2023) and the last day of the summer term would be 19th July 2024 (rather than 24th July 2024).

11. FINANCE AND STAFFING

Draft budget allocation 2023-24

- 11.1 The Business Manager presented a report.
- 11.2 The Business Manager said that funding would be up by about 4%. This was based on the strong census figure of 898, which was 2 students below capacity. Had there been a full roll, the school would have received another £10 to 15K.
- 11.3 The Business Manager said that uncertainty remained over the teachers' pay award for next year. Anything above the assumed 3% would adversely impact on the school's finances unless it was fully funded by the DfE.

Staffing Report

- 11.4 The Business Manager reported that staffing had been reviewed in detail at Resources Committee.
- 11.5 The Business Manager presented a proposal from the Leadership Team, to provide a progression route for some colleagues, for whom a Leadership post may not be their preferred route. This involved the creation of 2 or 3 'Lead Practitioner' posts. This needed governor approval, as it would also include a change to the school's pay policy.
- 11.6 The Business Manager estimated that the cost of creating the posts would be around an average of £7K as a differential between the current and promoted posts, subject to exactly who was appointed. He had included the money within the 2023-24 budget already, to illustrate that it was affordable.
- 11.7 The Business Manager said that the proposal was likely to help with staff retention.

- 11.8 The Business Manager said that the proposed pay range for the posts was likely to be L9 to L13. This reflected that L9 was just above what a Head of Faculty was paid, and L13 was below the Associate AHT spine which began at L14.
- 11.9 Governors **approved** the Lead Practitioner proposal.

12. TEACHING AND LEARNING / STRATEGIC UPDATES

School Improvement Plan

- 12.1 The Headteacher said that the school had received an FFT national attendance award and was within the top 10% for the autumn term.
- 12.2 The Headteacher said that form tutors were more involved now in pastoral care.
- 12.3 The Headteacher said that feedback had been received from staff concerning staff wellbeing. 76% said that they were comfortable in challenging the way things were done.
- 12.4 The Headteacher reported that a review of inclusive practice relating to recruitment and staff development was due to take place in March and April.
- 12.5 The Headteacher reported that assessment principles were beginning to be embedded. There was a clear focus on intent and implementation. A consistent approach could now be expected to be seen in books and in classrooms across departments as a result of development with HOFs and the use of learning journeys.
- 12.6 **A governor asked why the learning walk element was marked in red.** The Headteacher said that this had not been undertaken yet to review the impact in respect of SEND, however it was scheduled for the summer term.

SEF

- 12.7 The Headteacher said that the whole of the SEF for Leadership and Management had been provided, with links to supporting documentation. There was also a summary for governors, so it was possible to see why the school was outstanding in respect of Leadership and Management. Governance sits within Leadership and Management.
- 12.8 The Headteacher reported that the implementation of case studies would provide evidence of the impact of CPD on students.
- 12.9 The Headteacher said that she was looking for incremental improvements in communication and workload. There was an emphasis on distributed leadership.
- 12.10 The Headteacher said that work on curriculum and assessment was not sufficiently embedded yet. It had begun during January 2022. There was a risk that this would not appear sufficiently developed if Ofsted were to visit during the coming summer term. However, it was not possible to rush this initiative as staff needed time to review and implement the changes.

12.11 The Headteacher highlighted what could be done to develop further: embedding revised vision and values with all stakeholders, including as part of pastoral and academic calendars; drafting case studies of Year 11 students (both progress and attainment); full roll-out and acceleration of faculty reviews; ensuring that all middle leaders could express the ambition of their curriculum; publication of progression maps; use of external consultants to validate the school's judgements; sharpening the school priorities and leadership responsibilities around our vision and values and outcomes from data and information; embedding of strategic work with governors and developing a stronger understanding of the role of the curriculum.

12.12 The summary document of what leaders evaluated and when was **received**.

13. SCHOOL POLICIES

13.1 The School Financial Value Standard document was **received**. The Business Manager said that finances would be tight, and that staffing structures were being reviewed. Every question in the document had been answered yes. It was also important that any third-party associations be declared. This was data received from declarations of interest. The document was **approved** for submission to the LA by 31st March 2023.

13.2 The Statement of Internal Control was **approved**.

13.3 The School Fund Account Audit 2021-22 was **received** and **approved**. Governors acknowledged the hard work of staff.

13.4 The Fundraising Policy was **approved**.

13.5 The Sickness Absence Policy was **approved**.

13.6 The Grievance Policy was **approved**.

13.7 The Disciplinary Policy was **approved**.

13.8 The Equalities Statement and Objectives were **approved**. It was noted that the objectives were now aligned to the School Improvement Plan.

13.9 The Anti-Bullying statement was **ratified**.

13.10 The Rewards and Achievement Policy was **ratified**.

13.11 The Home School Agreement was **ratified**.

14. OTHER GOVERNANCE ITEMS

14.1 The cycle of business for the remainder of 2022/23 was received and approved.

14.2 The Governance Impact Statement 2021-22 was noted and approved.

14.3 The Publication of Governor Information for the school website was approved.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Deputy Headteacher Recruitment

- 15.1 The Chair reported that 7 candidates had been invited for interview. 6 had attended. 4 progressed to the second day. However, the panel had decided not to appoint on this occasion. The post would be re-advertised before the Easter holiday and interviews would take place early next term.

Performance Management Report Back

- 15.2 The Headteacher referred governors to the report which had been circulated.
- 15.3 The Headteacher reported that 3 staff eligible to apply for Threshold had not done so. Attempts had been made to establish why.
- 15.4 The Headteacher said that of the staff who were eligible for pay progression, 1 Leadership Group member had not progressed, and 1 teacher on UPS had not progressed to UPS 3.
- 15.5 The Chair reported that the Headteacher's performance review had taken place. The Pay Committee had approved progression of 1 point as recommended by the performance review panel. The Headteacher's objectives would be sent to governors the following day. **Action: Chair**

16. DATES OF NEXT TERM'S MEETINGS

- 16.1 The date of the next full governing body meeting is 16th May 2023 at 6.30pm at the school. This would be the budget ratification meeting.
- 16.2 Other meetings in the summer term:
Resources: 2 May (Budget)
Curriculum: 13 June
Resources: 27 June
FGB: 11 July
- 16.3 The Chair highlighted the date of this year's Governors' Day – 20 June 9am to 3pm - when all governors are asked to spend the day in school familiarising themselves with wider aspects of the school and reviewing their strategic responsibilities as a governing body.

The meeting closed at 8.54pm