

7th April 2022 in E5 – Meeting started at 3.30pm

| Attendees | Initials | Position | Comments |
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| Bloodworth, Andy | ABL | Headteacher | Present |
| Hemsworth, Robert | RH | Parent Governor | Not Present |
| Major, David | DM | Parent Governor | Present on Teams |
| Meeson, Sam | SM | Member Appointed Governor (Joint Vice Chair) | Apologies |
| Newberry, Ian | IN | Member Appointed Governor (Chair of Governors) | Present |
| Rhymer, Matt | MAR | Staff Governor (Associate Governor) | Present |
| Smith, Doug | DS | Member Appointed Governor | Apologies |
| Sparrow, Annie | ASP | Staff Governor (Associate Governor) | Present |
| Stevens, Jo-Anne | JAS | Parent Governor | Present |
| Wall, Lesley | LW | Co-opted Governor (Joint Vice Chair) | Present on Teams |
| Wynne, Colin | CW | Co-opted Governor | Present |
| Pateman, Jo | JMP | Governance Professional | Present |

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| | <p>in the Hardy Centre. We are seeing lots of unsettled children in school, and the work of the Hardy Centre staff is very reactionary at the minute. JSA joined at 3.44pm</p> <p>CMS is seeing lots of pupils using their TLC cards, using toilet breaks to get out of class, truanting, going home by saying they are ill, there are lots of angry pupils, a lack of tolerance and lots of tricky behaviour leading to MR1 callouts. When unpicked, and talking to young people about their anxiety, it stems from grief, low self-esteem and feelings of not being able to access normal everyday expectations.</p> <p>Parents are wanting their children to be diagnosed with 'something' as they are seeing behaviour that is worrying to them. The anxiety of parents can often be why their children are not coming into school and we end up with avoidance and guilt behaviour. There is a cycle of parents who have struggled to support their children during lockdown, which has made some children feel like they are failing compared to others. The media doesn't help, as it constantly talks about catching up. Plus everyday demands. Services are broken and are not able to support young people in accessing the services they need. This has led to self harm, OCD, school avoidance, and compounding mental health problems.</p> <p>As a school, we suggest parents refer to GP in the first instance but GP's are referring straight back to the school and the school counsellor. Pupils end up 'floating' around rather than being supported appropriately. We are lucky as we do have a school counsellor, but her time is limited. She has been rushing children through quicker than she would like, so that she can meet with other pupils. Parents are finding private counsellors, but when they try to use them to support medical inclusion, it is not recognised. We are asked to use CAMHS, but they are simply not accessible.</p> <p>We work very closely with young people and parents, and that is our strong point. CMS discussed the 3 case studies she had provided prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Moving forward, we need to refer to the mental health policy in school. Our counsellor is looking to retire later this. Early help and mental health no longer exist, there is no external training for staff, and we are looking to do in house training instead.</p> <p>This is a national position and the government are looking at putting mental health workers in school, but we have no idea what experience or qualifications those people will have, and there has been no further contact or information to date.</p> <p>CMS suggests that the numbers of C3 and C3 (behaviour points), would show that staff are dealing with massive amounts of behavioural displays, and other young people in the classroom are being disrupted by this behaviour which is having a knock on effect to everyone.</p> <p>LW thanked CMS for her report and commented how lucky the school was to have her.</p> | <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> |
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| | | <p>Q – curious about the mental health workers the government are providing, is this a separate person who will come to GTS, or funding for training? We do not know. Funding is in place for a mental health lead. This may simply be 1 person for the whole of Devon, we just do not know yet and this service may not be as good as what we are already doing in school.</p> <p>There are a lot of pupils self-diagnosing and this is a huge topic of conversation for lots of year 9 and 10 girls. We need to put resilience back on the agenda and find a way of supporting our pupils, i.e. is it anxiety or just nerves.</p> <p>We are also short on space and will be down to 1 main room and a few counselling rooms. As our pupil numbers grow, the Hardy Centre is getting smaller and this will affect what we are able to offer to pupils.</p> <p>Q – how many pupils are you seeing now prepared to pre-covid? CMS advised again that this is anecdotal, as she does not have figures, but she would say daily, 5 or 6 pupils. We also have the pastoral team and the pupil coaches are dealing with more behaviour than they did previously.</p> <p>Q – can you pin all of that down to Covid? No but it is noticeable that children have not been around each other for 2 years. It is reflected across schools, locally and nationally.</p> <p>Q – what can the governing body do to help? Safeguard a big space, recognise there is massive pressure on staff and young people to fit back into our systems. Recognise that we have challenging parents than we ever have before.</p> <p>Q – how do we approach the problems of not being able to access CAMHS, get GPs on board et. Can we address those issues? ABL met with Dawn Stabb recently, the LA are aware and there are plans for a new social work structure and mental health structure.</p> <p>Q – do staff get the support they need? Yes we work in a team and we support one another.</p> <p>CMS and HVW left at 4.07pm</p> | <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> |
| 2021/22/ FGB/56 | Minutes and Matters Arising | The minutes of the meeting on the 10th February 2022 were approved as true reflection of the meeting and were authorised to be signed. There were no matters arising. | D, I |
| 2021/22/ FGB/ 58 | Safeguarding | <p>DA had provided a safeguarding report prior to the meeting. Figures are high in the report, however there is always a spike in the autumn term, predominately because we get new pupils we don't much about, so always a spike in safeguarding which then usually plateaus off. This year is particularly high in terms of incidents. Self-harm is high, 10 last year up to 15 this year. Sexualised incidents are quite high, but we haven't recorded this until the summer term so do not have comparison data.</p> <p>MASH enquiries are consistent throughout the year. The threshold for MASH has not got any easier, to get social care involved is really difficult and a pupil must be at significant risk of harm before they get involved. We challenge many referrals that are knocked back, ultimately if social care do not pick up this simply comes back to the school. If parents don't engage, which they often don't, school ends up holding the risk of that child.</p> <p>Worth noting that the number of PP children has increased by 22, most PP is to do with poverty and household income, that is not getting any easier in the current climate and we anticipate some issues with those pupils kids. All CiC and CiN are PP so there is a direct correlation between PP and child protection.</p> | <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> |

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| | | <p>Lots of kids travel to GTS and that will become even more difficult and may impact on attendance.</p> <p>Safety in schools survey – this has thrown up some interesting points. We have now completed Year 11, 10 and 9 assemblies and split the years into boys and girls and asked them in small groups to write down the words and behaviours they experience in school. The second point is to write down how that makes them feel, third part is to categorise those behaviours into what would be acceptable, unacceptable, sexual harassment and sexual violent. Girls in particular play things down and Ofsted say we would experience this. The next phase is to run a series of citizenship classes over a 6 week period, to tackle all of this word behaviours, what it looks like, how it makes them feel, and what the expectations are and also looking at racist and homophobic language.</p> <p>Q – how will you know that it has been successful? We will run another pupil voice. We would also expect to have more incidents as pupils become more aware of what they should be reporting. We will then need to ask if pupils feel any safer and whether the behaviour has changed. DA wants kids to leave school understanding what is socially acceptable.</p> <p>CPOMS is an electronic system for monitoring safeguarding concerns, previously accessible by pastoral staff and SLT only. We have now extended this to tutors. Further down the line, we can link this to PDPM to ensure staff are recognising and raising safeguarding concerns.</p> <p>Q – is there a list of acronyms? ABL challenges this, all governors must read and be fully aware of the safeguarding policy.</p> <p>ABL advised governors that having run a number of internal interviews recently, he has some concerns over safeguarding responses from out staff. DA feels are staff are good at identifying a concern or worry, but not so good at putting it into a category. Our staff can lack curiosity.</p> <p>Q – is this a lack of training or support? Our training is good, we feel it's a lack of understanding of what staff need to do. So often, their response at having seen something is simply to pass it on to DA. ASP argued that it can be difficult to check in with 1 pupil when you have a class of 30, teachers are in pressured for time.</p> <p>DA advised that Ofsted will speak to our staff about safeguarding. The recent Babcock report stated that our staff did not fully understand all aspects of safeguarding.</p> <p>IN suggested that the safeguarding training may need to be quality assured. We have identified there is a problem and we will raised this at the next meeting to determine what action has been taken. DA left at 4.30pm.</p> | <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> |
| 2021/22/ FGB/ 59 | Committee Matters | There was nothing of note to report from T&L or Resources. | I |
| 2021/22/ FGB/ 61 | Policies | None | I |

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| 2021/22/ FGB/ 64 | Skills Update | The clerk to finish inputting LW scores into an audit form, IN to identify gaps in skills and knowledge, which will link into a Babcock training session. IN reminded governors that it is critical that everyone attends, this is about working as a team and moving forward. | I |
| 2021/22/ FGB/60 | New Build | <p>JMB joined at 4.37pm. Update since resources, asbestos survey report is now in, indicates asbestos has been removed in the area we are concerned about, but they want proof we have removed it. KLH working on this from the archives. Indication is should not have significant asbestos to remove.</p> <p>Solicitors fee for grant agreement – they have increased their costs but JMB negotiated down. The building regs are submitted, we are awaiting clarification of costs from TDC. Updated full project cost build element estimated at £956k provisionally, now accurate costing based on today's still projected costs, £975k. Coming in complete as 1.1 to 1.2 million. Total expenditure once latest orders paid is £55,323.00. Next set of TFQ invoices have come in, JMB is challenging some of the disbursements. IN argues fuel should be 45p per mile as per HM Revenue. CW argues that should be agreed in advance. JMB assumed that £100k fees would include photocopying and fuel.</p> | I I |
| 2021/22/ FGB/67 | Items through the chair | There has been an updated planning application from Briar Hayes, should we pursue challenging again? The building was a 3 bedroom detached bungalow but looked like 4 to 5, as very spacious, double garage with office space with windows, on boundary of ATP. Concerns of orientation of house, had windows looking straight into grounds i.e., safeguarding concerns, also future noise and light pollution complaints from ATP. Committee agree objections still stand. JMB left at 4.46pm | I D |
| 2021/22/ FGB/ 62 | SIP and Monitoring Roles | This had been on the agenda of T&L but some governors were absent, hence raised at FGB now. ABL met with Simon Bissett (Babcock) and SM today for his mid-year review, SM Raised that ABL should add updates from the SIPs, ABL countered that as the whole process was for governors to contact the staff responsible and governors should then report the progress, not ABL, as governors should be finding out their own proof/information. Governors reviewed the monitoring roles again, voted and accepted. Governors with responsibilities to make contact with staff in school. | I D |
| 2021/22/ FGB/ 63 | Headteachers Report | <p>Headteacher report from SIMS again as the other format is still not working correctly. ABL drew attention to the year groups in terms of key indicators i.e. SEN, PP, FSM, EAL – they are all increasing and they are all a strain on education. Raised before, we are having more of these types of pupils and as CMS recognised, pupils who are disadvantaged tend to be the ones with mental health, safeguarding, behaviour etc. need to be aware that as time moves on the challenges will be potentially greater.</p> <p>Number of exclusions is a concern. Feel behaviour in lessons is ok and the more problems are unstructured time and to and from school. Feel staff use the system well, we have done deep dives and struggled to find poor behaviour.</p> <p>Attendance 90% - pleasantly surprised to see that. Normally 94% for that term so not that far down. Q – why down in your opinion? Covid, not just illness but anxiety, financial, children having covid. Every absence is challenged and scrutinised, we have a rigorous process in terms of our absentees.</p> <p>The DfE wanted us to use more internal exclusions rather than external, they have even changed the name of external to suspensions to try and change the figures. Need to look at the end of the year and then analyse the data and see whether we have been excluding correctly. Don't have data for the last 2 years due to covid. Need to start baselineing.</p> | I I Q I |

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| | | <p>Q – any evidence to say whether exclusions (perm) are up in other schools? Starting to go through the roof at the moment, know others are struggling with FTE.</p> <p>Q – any particular schools? Discussed local schools, all put out permanently, and lots appealed and turned over.</p> <p>MAR – suggests someone joining the exclusion panel (JMP sent out info not long ago).</p> <p>Q – what is the difference between the reports? ABL wanted to do 3 times per year, came across an online system that in theory pulled the data from SIMS and ABL could then do a narrative around it for comparative data – the data is now not syncing, trying to work on it. The report is much better than the SIMS one.</p> <p>CW – governors will be asked by Ofsted how you know what the HT is telling you is the truth, we should use the Head’s report and our visits to verify information.</p> | <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> |
| 2021/22/ FGB/ 65 | Covid Update | <p>Issuing staff with guidance on how to manage illness and positive testing after easter. Essentially if you test positive only come to work when you no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough. DfE and NHS guidance differs!</p> <p>Q – what about staff off because of family? Guidance will have to go back to normal childcare.</p> <p>Staffing – yesterday was worse day but not all Covid. Have been hit by a significant number of absences – it has been very challenging. Have managed to keep school open just hope when we come back we don’t have another re-cycle as that tends to happen 2 weeks after holiday. Clearly a problem as DCC are sending out more info on closing schools and sending year groups home so it is a problem elsewhere.</p> | <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> |
| 2021/22/ FGB/ 66 | Governor Visit Policy | SM has provided a model policy. All voted and agreed to adopt , SM will ‘GTS’ the policy. | I, D |
| 2021/22/ FGB/ 67 | Items Through the Chair | CW raised exit interviews and asked what exactly was done with the report. Governors discussed this at length and noted that not many exit interviews had been conducted as staff do not ask for them. It was agreed that all staff would have an exit interview scheduled for them, and it would be for the member of staff to cancel if they did not wish to have the interview. The report would be discussed with ABL and also raised at Resources to ensure any action points were addressed. | I, D |
| 2021/22/ FGB/ 68 | Final Point | <p>Views on monitoring SIP</p> <p>Visits to school</p> <p>Safeguarding discussed at length</p> <p>Why teachers are leaving and feedback to school improve teaching</p> <p>ABL, JMP, MAR and ASP left at 5.23pm</p> | |
| 2021/22/ FGB/ 69 | Dates of net meetings | <p>T&L 30th June 2022</p> <p>Resources 7th July 2022</p> <p>FGB 14th July 2022</p> | I |

Meeting closed at 5.23pm

Action Points

| Minute Reference | Action | By Whom | By When |
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Signed Chair of Governors

Date