

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHITCHURCH HIGH SCHOOL
GOVERNING BODY HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON TUESDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 2014**

PRESENT

Mrs J Slack (Chair); Mr H Jones-Williams (Headteacher); Dr P Bulpin; Mr D Roylance; Mr M Vine; Mrs S Hopkins; Mr I Mcillquham; Dr M Newman; Mrs J Ford; Mr S Williams; Mrs G Bell; Mrs M Lewis; Mrs J Packman; Mrs T Clarke; Mrs V Best; Mr R Haigh; Mr R Burge; Mr A Rooke; Mr N John; Mr D Collins, Mrs L Pearce, Mr D Greaves and Mr G Coombs (Clerk to the Governors) **First part of the meeting** Mr J Davies; Mr P Morgan; Mr S Evans-Pask (Consultant from Untethered UK);

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APOLOGIES

Denise Kelland; Jacqui Palmer and Jonathan Evans

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STRATEGIC EQUALITIES PLAN – Messrs J Davies and P Morgan (AHTs) introduced Mr Shaun Evans-Paske, Consultant from “Untethered UK”, who they had been working with on updating the current Strategic Equality Plan and Policy. Shaun gave a short presentation. This involved raising further awareness of the legislation regarding the promotion of equality in schools and for this to be updated in the school’s Policy and Practice. Governors were introduced to the revised “Strategic Equality Plan 2014-2018” which continued to reflect the introduction of new legislation and the replacement of some other legislation from the Equality Act of 2010. One of the more important requirements of the new legislation was that a strategic equality report must be produced by the school annually.

Governors discussed and

AGREED That the Strategic Equalities Plan Policy 2014-2018 be formally adopted.

(Jonathan, Paul and Shaun left the meeting)

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MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting held on 15th September 2014 were confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:-

Minute 3(i): Curriculum and Achievement Committee –
Delete: “Mr D Collins (Observer)”.

There were no matters arising.

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ELECTION OF CHAIR: 2014-15

Joyce Slack was elected Chair for the academic year.

(Joyce Slack in the Chair)

14 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR: 2014-15

Sian Hopkins was elected Vice Chair for the academic year.

15 REGISTER OF BUSINESS INTERESTS

Completed forms were handed in by all governors.

16 HEADTEACHER'S REPORT – Mr H Jones-Williams

A full written report was received by governors.

The Headteacher expanded upon the main points of the School Improvement Plan: Key Priorities 2014/15. Supporting documentation was provided covering key issues affecting standards, provision and leadership and management. Celebration of success and information points including articles from the school website were included in the report and noted with great interest by governors. Of particular note was the involvement of ten year 13 pupils from the sixth form in a Mock NATO summit in Newport and the involvement of pupils in the Great British Geobakeoff.

Charities and events were again supported including Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day – the laying of Ceramic Poppies at the Tower of London.

In the field of sport, the Headteacher reported that the Cross Country competition this year was one of the best with almost one thousand pupils taking part. Also the Under 16 rugby team was very honoured to be selected as one of the three teams for junior team of the year and produced a fantastic display at the millennium Stadium to beat Ebbw Vale in the final.

On behalf of the governors the Chair asked the Headteacher to pass on their appreciation to all the school staff for their continued support for and contribution to the school.

The Headteacher thanked the chair and wished to record that the visit of governors to the school was much appreciated and valued. The Chair encouraged all governors to visit the school to meet the staff and pupils, particularly those who had not as yet done so.

17 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

(i) KS4 and KS3 Benchmarking 2014

This document received by governors showed Whitchurch High School's Quartile performance for 2014 benchmarked against other schools of similar 10% to 15% F.S.M. (free school meals). There were some 50+ schools out of approximately 210 secondary schools in Wales in this F.S.M. group. It was noted that for some schools one pupil represented some 6% of the cohort whereas in WHS one pupil equate to 0.25% because of the size of year groups. The ultimate aim was to reach Quartile 1.

With regard to all core subjects (English, Maths and Science) the Headteacher reported that strategies had been put in place which should show a marked improvement by 2015. This would also be the case for other subjects. This would address the points made in the warning letter dated 24th October 2014 issued by the Local Authority to the Governing Body. Underperformance was therefore being challenged.

Under Fisher Family Trust (FFT) analysis, which takes account of prior attainment and other social contexts, it was noted that the school was not as yet meeting required standards in all areas. However strategies which have been put in place should improve matters and have the required impact for 2015. Governors would be further updated on performance progress, as normally done , throughout the year.

(ii) National Categorisation Process

The Headteacher provided governors with the “School Improvement Report” which had been co-authored by the governors, headteacher and CSC challenge advisor as per protocol. Documents relating to the “National Metrics System” and the “National School Improvement and Categorisation System” were received. Opinions differed between the school and the LEA and CSC Consortium with regard to the level of standards being achieved by the school; the level of funding provided to the school and the support needed. At this stage the school was on the cusp of being three/four for standards and the level of support judged by CSC was red. The school believed it should be amber for support. The Chair and Headteacher would be meeting with representatives from CSC and the LEA shortly regarding the matter and would keep governors informed. The Welsh Government would also be confirming in January 2015 the categorisation of standards of schools which may not replicate the current CSC judgements.

(iii) School Improvement Plan 2014 to 2015

The School Improvement Plan document was received and the main points highlighted by the Headteacher. It was noted that the Headteacher (HJW), Deputy Head teacher (GBe), and two assistant head teachers (JWD and NSJ) would be visiting our linked PiXL partner school, Woolwich Polytechnic in London. This was in the highest 20% performing schools in the UK. It was hoped to observe “best practice” which could then be used at Whitchurch High School.

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CURRICULUM REVIEW

The School Executive Curriculum Design and Delivery Review was presented by Gaynor Bell and received by governors, having previously gone through extensive scrutiny with the governors’ curriculum and achievement sub-committee.

The changes in the curriculum and revised key performance indicators (KPI’s) at Key Stage 4 arising from Qualifications Wales were highlighted and explained. Literacy and numeracy at Key Stage 3 would be the subject of a further review at WHS following the publication of the Donaldson Report in the New Year.

In response to a query regarding the allowance for creativity in the curriculum, it was reported that there were no plans to take drama out of key stages 3 or 4.

The plans to involve parents at an early stage in the consultation process regarding proposed changes in the curriculum were supported by governors. Meetings with parents had already been held and further meetings were planned. The Headteacher assured governors that the interests of the child would be paramount.

Governors were presented with three Key Stage 4 curriculum “model options” with the governors curriculum and achievement committee recommending option 2 as noted in the recommendation stated;-

“The committee was pleased to acknowledge the very positive approach of the school to continuous improvement and the commissioning of this review to assess the effectiveness of the current curriculum. We were provided with a comprehensive review of the curriculum as outlined in this executive summary and recognised the huge amount of preparatory work that had been undertaken to produce the review.

We were presented with three possible models and questioned Gaynor Bell and Nick John in depth for over two hours on their findings and recommendations.

After careful consideration and deliberation, the committee chose option (ii) because it was considered to be the model which best fulfilled the needs of all the school's pupils and adhered to the changes to be implemented by Welsh Government.

The other models were rejected because option (i) was not practical given the need to build into the curriculum additional time for the teaching of Maths and English and a dedicated WBQ provision and that option (iii) would unduly restrict student choice on an arbitrary and inflexible basis.

AGREED that curriculum model for Key Stage 4 to be from September 2015 – Core Hours (35); consisting of English (8); Maths (8); Science (9); WBQ [including PSE] (4); PE (2); RE (2) and Welsh (2): Options (15); consisting of three option blocks (5)

Further curriculum updates would be given at future full governing body meetings e.g. January 2015 when it was expected that the Donaldson Report would have been published. It was therefore

AGREED that “The Review of the Curriculum” be placed on the agenda for the next meetings.

Governors thanked Gaynor for the interesting and informative presentation.

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LEADERSHIP REVIEW

**MINUTE 19 WAS DEEMED CONFIDENTIAL
FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE PUBLICATION OF THE MINUTES**

20

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(i) Standards Committee

It was agreed that a Standards Committee be set up and that the first full meeting be convened in the spring term.

(ii) Admissions Committee

A verbal report was given by Sian Hopkins. Admission numbers had risen from 360 to 370. It was

AGREED that admissions to year 11 needed to go through the Admissions Committee.

(iii) Buildings and Estates Committee

A verbal report was given. Awareness was raised of the following matters:-

- Work on the Tower Block Lifts to be completed in March 2015.
- Work on the swimming pool changing rooms was ongoing.
- Development of the US SRB unit and associated works were progressing well.
- Work on the new build US weights room was ongoing.
- US DDA investment plans currently jointly being formulated with the Council.
- Terrapin classrooms require replacing; LEA visit awaited; been cancelled twice.

(iv) Finance Committee

Written minutes of the meeting were presented by Menna Lewis and received and accepted by governors. It was

AGREED that there was a need for the completion of the "Control of Risk Assessment Self Evaluation Diagnostic Tool Kit" by 10th January 2015.

It was noted that the Chair had recently become the second of two secondary school governor members of The Cardiff Schools' Budget Forum.

(v) Governor Review Week Feedback

Following discussion it was

AGREED that this be deferred to the next meeting.

21 POLICIES FOR ADOPTION

It was

AGREED to adopt the following policies:-

- Strategic Equalities Plan 2014 to 2018
- Attendance Policy
- Sexual Relationships Education Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Agreement for future governor policy adoption.

It was

AGREED that the Admissions Policy be reviewed and that the Chair would circulate the reviewed version when available.

22 CAROL SERVICE

To be held on Thursday 18th December 2014.

23 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Minute 19 was deemed as confidential for the purpose of the publication of the minutes.

24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 19th January 2015 commencing at 7:00pm.

Meeting concluded.



SIGNED:

CHAIR OF GOVERNOR