

The Harvey Grammar School

Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body number A15 held on Thursday 3rd March 2016 at 5.00 p.m. in the Trafalgar Room

Present: Mr. J. Dennis (JD) (Chair), Mr. J. Batten (JB), Mr. M. Bridges (MB) (Vice-chair), Mr. K. Bridgland (KCB), Mrs. A. Brown (AB), Mrs. K. Callander (KC), Mr. W. Dawson (WD), Mrs. M. Mitchell (MM), Mr. S. Norman (SN) (Headteacher), and Mr. J. Smith (JAS)

In attendance: Mr. S. Goodfellow (SJG) Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum) and Mr. Marc Stevenson (MS) (AHT – Victory House)

Clerk: Mr. M. Hydes (MCH)

No.	Item/detail	Action
	<p>The following papers were available on the intranet in advance of the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Minutes of the meeting held on 10th December 2015</i> • <i>Headteacher’s Report</i> • <i>School Improvement Plan Up-date</i> • <i>Chair’s Report</i> • <i>Governor Visit Report – Attendance</i> • <i>Report on SPPC Meeting – 22nd February 2016</i> 	
1.	<p>Chair’s Introduction and Welcome</p>	
	<p>The chair welcomed all to the meeting and confirmed that it was quorate. The Chair noted that it was 25 years since Mr. John Smith had joined the governing body and thanked him for his distinguished service to the school over the many years since he left in 1953. To mark the occasion copies of the minutes from Mr. Smith’s first governing body meeting on 1/5/91 were circulated.</p> <p>The Chair explained that Mr. Tony Scott had decided to step down from the governing body due to professional and work commitments. The chair, on behalf of the governing body, expressed thanks for the contribution made to the school, particularly in respect of the SPPC committee. The Members of the Harvey Academy Trust were considering a replacement.</p> <p>The chair introduced Mr. Marc Stevenson to governors who would be giving a presentation on staff professional development.</p>	
2.	<p>Presentation by Marc Stevenson (AHT – Victory House) on “Staff Training at the Harvey”.</p>	
	<p>Governors asked about how much the training budget amounted to and were advised that the figure was £10k. Governors agreed that for the range of activities undertaken this represented very good value for money.</p> <p>Governors asked the HT for his perspective on staff training. The HT commented that there had been a move away from staff attending training courses organised by an external provider to more on-line training and in-house activities. This enabled a more focused approach to needs e.g. all staff in a department could participate in on-line training at the same time and at much less cost than one person attending a course in London. It was also noted that teacher training arrangements had changed for the better in that,</p>	

	<p>through programmes such as Schools Direct, the school could be proactive in the type of training given. The HT acknowledged that there was a degree of frustration in that after training good people the school did not always have the opportunities to provide career progression although it was conceded that other schools would be beneficiaries. The HT added that the question of staff development frequently arose at interviews and was pleased that Harvey could offer such a diverse programme from induction to senior leadership opportunities.</p> <p>In respect of a governor's enquiry about the length of time spent on training it was explained that apart from one or two training days at the start of the year, the programme was delivered through 10 twilight training sessions. The programme facilitated flexibility and a response to need as well as being beneficial to parents compared to whole day training in that they had to make arrangements to look after their children.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the presentation had been excellent and the chair thanked Mr Stevenson for his work in this area of school life.</p>	
3.	Apologies for Absence	
	Apologies had been received from Mrs. S. Hammond and Mrs. A. Shone. In both cases these were for work commitments.	Clerk
4.	Declaration of Business Interests	
	None declared other than always registered.	
5.	Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th December 2015.	
	Subject to some minor grammatical errors the minutes were confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed by the chair.	Clerk
6.	Matters Arising from the Minutes	
6.1	8.2 Pupil Performance	
	Governors were advised that RAISEonline data had been scrutinised at the SPPC meeting on 22 nd February 2016 (see below)	
6.2	9. Chair's Report	
	The Chair commented that there had been no developments in respect of the trust. It was noted that the HT had been invited to a meeting with the Regional Schools Commissioner in the week beginning on 9 th March 2016.	
7.	To Receive the Headteacher's Report	
7.1	School Improvement and Self-Evaluation	
	<p>Governors were pleased to note that the school rated itself as outstanding in all areas in the self-evaluation recently updated to reflect published data in 2016. Governor's attention was drawn to the Inspection Dashboard which contained a long list of strengths but only one weakness (which, in turn, could be attributed to just one student). Whilst it was recognized that there had been a 'blip' in sixth form performance in 2015, governors were pleased to note that the issues behind this had been fully addressed and could be validated by 2015 AS results. Destination data for 2015 (which showed 24.0% of students going on to Russell Group universities) and a rise in retention rates by 10.0% over the past three years provided further evidence of the strengths inherent in the sixth form at Harvey.</p> <p>A governor asked about the gender gap between boys' and girls' results. In discussion, governors were concerned at the apparent lack of any government initiative to address the matter despite it being a growing phenomenon over</p>	

	<p>the last twenty years. The HT commented that at the Harvey the philosophy was to educate against the stereotype and to work harder and smarter. Governors noted that the HT had recently held a Y11 assembly themed on the importance of aspiration.</p> <p>Governors were pleased to learn that the school had recently submitted a £2.3 million bid to the EFA's Condition Improvement Fund for an extension to the Sports Hall including a state of the art gymnasium and extra classrooms. The outcome of the bid would be known by the end of March.</p> <p>A governor enquired whether the newly constructed Wright Building was meeting expectations and was assured that it was proving to be an excellent addition to the school estate.</p> <p>Governors noted the SIP up-date with green colour coding indicating those actions that are or have been delivered and amber where an action has yet to be undertaken. A governor noted that target 4 still had a lot of 'amber' coding but was assured that this reflected the fact that the actions required were a feature of the latter part of the school year.</p>	
7.2	Pupil Performance	
	<p>Governors noted that the school was considering its position in respect of Y12 students continuing to sit AS level examinations. The HT commented that many institutions had ignored the advice of leading universities and opted out of the AS examination. This could lead to some students going on to higher education being offered places based on predictions and some on their AS results. The HT advised governors that the school would make a final judgement based on the best interests of its pupils.</p>	
7.3	Staffing	
	<p>Governors were pleased to learn that the school had successfully recruited a maths teacher experienced in teaching at all key stages to meet the need for extra capacity in the maths department. Governors also noted that a new trainee on the schools direct programme had been recruited to the English department.</p> <p>Governors were advised that the school would soon be advertising for a French teacher to fill an imminent vacancy. A governor confirmed that the new appointment would be a French specialist and would have the ability to teach at all key stages.</p> <p>Governors noted that the recently recruited Head of Business Studies and Economics had made an excellent start to life at the Harvey.</p>	
7.4	Pupil Census	
	<p>Governors were pleased to note the upward trend in pupil numbers to a total of 902 and the absence of any fixed term exclusions in the autumn term.</p> <p>A governor enquired about the slight fall in Y7 numbers and was advised that this was due to families moving out of the area.</p>	
7.5	Finance	
	<p>Governors expressed concern at the unpromising financial picture due to increasing on costs against flat per pupil funding.</p>	

	<p>Governors acknowledged that an increasing school roll (due to the impact of the Shepway Test) had helped school finances as well as keeping a tight rein on expenditure and avoiding unnecessary expenditure.</p> <p>The chair advised governors that the disparity between local authorities in school funding was a national issue although 40 under-funded local authorities were making representations to central government.</p>	
7.6	Performance Management	
	<p>Governors were advised that the HT's performance management assessment for 2014-2015 had taken place on 8th December 2015 conducted by the chair, vice-chair and an independent assessor. Following the assessment the HT was congratulated on his performance.</p> <p>All support staff had had their mid-year review and all teaching staff were currently undertaking mid-year reviews.</p>	
7.7	Admissions	
	<p>Governors were informed that for the first time ever more parents of pupils assessed as selective placed the Harvey as first preference than places available. Governors acknowledged that this was a huge vote of confidence in the school. The situation for September 2016 was that 146 children in Shepway had been awarded places plus 4 from out of area. It was acknowledged that 16 children of selective ability had not been awarded places although there were selective schools in the area in which they lived.</p> <p>Governors were advised that, consequently, there were likely to be a number of appeals for places. The HT commented that whilst it had to accept the decision of the independent appeal panel the school was at full capacity and additional pupils would not be conducive to teaching and learning for all.</p>	
7.8	School Events and Achievements	
	The HT noted that a new website was being created and governors would be provided with log in details in due course.	
8.	To Receive the Chair's Report	
	<p>The Chair drew governors' attention to an article in "The Sunday Times" (3/1/16) about government thinking on the future role of grammar schools in terms of broadening their social intake and working with less successful schools to improve results. The Chair noted that he would be attending the bi-termly Kent Governor County Assembly meeting to be held on 7th March 2016 and would report on the presentation scheduled to be given by Mr. Dominic Herrington, Regional Schools Commissioner.</p>	Chair to report to governors at FGB meeting on 14/7/16
9.	To Consider Governing Body Items	
9.1	Governance Calendar	
	<p>Governors were informed of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next Focus Group meeting was on 17th March 2016 (co-ordinated by Mrs Heather Turnbull) • A drama showcase would take place on 22nd March 2016 • The Harvey Academy Company meeting on 18th August 2016 had been moved to 25th August 2016 (GCSE results day). 	
9.2	Up-date on Committee Structure and Membership, 2015-2016	
	The Chair informed governors that following the resignation of Mr. Tony Scott consideration was being given to a replacement on the SPPC committee	
9.3	Governor Training and Visits (including Link Governor Feedback)	

	<p>Governors noted a report from Mrs. Karen Callander on attendance which had taken place on 19th January 2016. Governors were pleased to learn that attendance statistics at Harvey were constant at 97.0% and exceeded the Ofsted benchmark of 95/96.0%.</p> <p>Two new governors had attended induction training organised by Kent County Council: both reported favourably on the programme. New governors enquired about a skills audit and were advised that this was being up-dated to include new members of the governing body.</p>	<p>Training governor – on-going.</p>
10.	<p>To Receive Committee Reports</p> <p>The vice-chair of the SPPC committee drew governors’ attention to aspects of the recent SPPC meeting as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAISE online had confirmed that the school was outstanding at KS4 • 2015 AS results and other data suggested that in 2016 the sixth form results would be very positive • 4 hours’ teaching had been allocated to maths and science at KS3 and English in years 7 and 8 from September 2016 (and Y9 from 2017) • The two route programme at KS4 had been refined to reflect that EBacc would be a headline measure • 3 new governors had received training on child protection <p>A governor had observed the MFL departmental review which had been commissioned as results were below the national mean for overall value added (including girls). The review demonstrated that the department were fully implementing the action plan drawn up at the start of the academic year. The department was particularly keen to improve results in Spanish and a range of support strategies had been put in place. It had also been decided to change exam board in view of some misgivings about the previous board. In discussion, governors were pleased to note that French results in 2015 had been above boys’ results nationally and that the school’s interventions and challenges to the department were being fulfilled.</p>	
11.	<p>To Consider Policies</p> <p>Governors considered four policies: Admissions, Attendance, Complaints and Health & Safety</p> <p>Admissions Policy Governors noted that a few points had been clarified e.g. Shepway boundaries. Admissions policies could not otherwise be altered without a six week consultation period. A governor enquired about policy in respect of sixth form admissions and was advised that this was criterion-referenced in terms of overall academic qualifications and course-specific requirements. Collaboration with Folkestone School for Girls meant that a wide range of courses were on offer between the two institutions.</p> <p>Attendance Policy Governors were informed that a number of matters had changed in respect of the national picture and the policy had been amended accordingly. A governor enquired as to whether the school had issued any penalty notices for unauthorised absence. The HT agreed to provide information from the last three years.</p>	<p>HT by 14/7/16</p>

	<p>Complaints Policy Governors noted that the policy had been up-dated in line with DfE guidance for academies e.g. the requirement to have one independent panel member.</p> <p>Health & Safety Governors queried several points about the H&S policy e.g. prevention of legionella disease and appropriate amendments were noted.</p> <p>Subject to the points noted above governors approved all four policies.</p>	
10.	Dates for future meetings	
	<p>The Chair confirmed dates for future meetings as shown on the governance calendar and on the school intranet.</p> <p>It was noted that Prizegiving would take place on 24th March 2016 with Mr Stephen Kelly (CEO Sage UK Ltd and Old Harveian) as guest speaker. All governors and their spouses/partners would shortly be receiving invitations to attend. The chair thanked the president of the Old Harveians' Association for their continuing sponsorship of the event.</p>	
11.	Any Other Business	
	None	
12.	Consider Confidentiality and Publication of Minutes	
	None	

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.10 p.m.

Signed _____ (Chair)

Date _____

