

Colyton Grammar School

Minutes of the Governing Body – Part One

Date of Meeting: Thursday 16 March 2017

Venue: Room 16, Walker Building

Present:

Trustees	Dr C Bastin, Mrs S Burns-Price, Mr G Davis, Rev H Dawson, Lt Col T J Dyer, Mr A Eaton-Hart, Mr M Goscomb, Mr T Harris (Headteacher), Mrs L Linnell, Mr B Merrett, Miss M Nickells, Mr R Scott, Mr B Sindall and Mrs V Wells.
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Staff	Mr A Gregson
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Visitors	Mr I Griffin, Mrs S Kastner and Mrs S Smith
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Secretary	Mr S R Cook
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Item	Minute	Action
1	Disclosure of Interest	
	There were no disclosures of interest.	
2	Apologies	
	There were no apologies.	
3	Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 8 December 2016	
	These were approved and signed.	
4	Matters Arising	
<i>4(a)</i>	<i>Item 21: Trustees' Annual Report</i>	
	Dr Bastin reminded the Board of the decision to publish a more accessible version of the Trustees' Annual Report contained in the Annual Accounts. Due to the departure of Mrs Robinson, this has not yet been produced but the aim is to provide this as soon as possible.	Secretary
<i>4(b)</i>	<i>Item 19: Governance Review Implementation Plan</i>	
	Dr Bastin reported on progress with the Governance Review Implementation Plan as discussed at the last meeting. Many of the recommendations are included in the draft revised Governing Body Yearbook to be considered under Item 8. Mr Goscomb indicated that while some momentum has been lost due to other key developments and priorities and the resignation of the previous Secretary to Trustees, a significant amount of work has been completed and is covered, for instance, in the Governing Body Yearbook (see Item 8) and the Lead Trustee proposals (see Item 13). The recently appointed new Secretary to Trustees will play an important	

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	supporting role in the implementation of a number of the Review's recommendations. The Chair will be reporting on progress at future Board meetings.	
	There were no other matters arising	
5	Headteacher's Performance Report	
	<p>Mr Harris drew the attention of the Board to the report which had been circulated prior to the meeting, focusing in particular on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FASNA conference he had attended which focused on the National Funding Formula. He commented particularly on the unrealistic Department for Education (DfE) focus on efficiency savings, but also indications that the DfE may be considering a review of the current funding proposals. • The South West Education Conference, which was attended by both the national and regional School Commissioners. He had reiterated the school's interest in the grammar schools programme and the Regional Schools Commissioner indicated that an announcement is likely in the next few weeks. • The selective schools' reception at Downing Street on Monday 20 March to which he has been invited. • The data analysis he has undertaken which shows that there appear to be only 18 high performing, disadvantaged students in Devon, and none in Torbay. This suggests a role for the school in working with primary schools to improve outcomes for these students at an earlier stage. Mr Sindall reflected on the indications that the DfE are considering a more flexible definition of "disadvantage" compared with the current focus on Pupil Premium. Mr Harris commented on discussions with the SWAT director from the University of Exeter on these issues, and the potential for partnership work on disadvantage with the university. A number of trustees commented on the challenges of responding to the government agenda in the light of these small numbers. <p>Initial discussions with CEM, who provide the entrance tests to the school, suggest that they are not planning to undertake any research on the proposal for setting a lower "pass mark" for disadvantaged students.</p> <p>Mr Harris also reported on the Regional School Commissioner's concerns about the relative under-performance of disadvantaged students in the South West.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The submission of an "expression of interest" in the new 	

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	<p>selective schools programme based on the Five Forms of Entry building expansion proposals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appointment of Mr Chris Harris as the Challenge Co-ordinator for SWAT and Mr Miles Smith as a Specialist Leader of Education for More Able students in the Jurassic Coast Teaching School Alliance. • Recent visits by the Bishop of Exeter and the principal of Magna Academy, Poole. The latter visit led to an extremely positive letter commenting on the quality of lessons and behaviour at Colyton. • The decision to create an additional “Elm House” as part of the expansion to five forms of entry from September 2017. <p>In response to Lt Col Dyer, Mr Harris clarified that the student feedback included in the report refers to Year 9 and Year 13. Lt Col Dyer also suggested that the report should be made available more widely.</p> <p>In response to Mr Goscomb, Mr Harris asked for the support of trustees in further development of the outreach programme for disadvantaged students. Mr Sindall commented that the Birmingham schools may have some useful experience to share.</p> <p>In response to Mrs Linnell, Mr Harris indicated that current indications are that the new Year 7 in September is likely to be full.</p> <p>Mr Sindall reflected on the strength of Colyton’s position in terms of admitting additional students, in the light of the number of applicants for the test.</p> <p>In response to Mr Griffin, Mr Harris indicated that the Sutton Trust might undertake the kind of research which CEM have declined to provide, but only very limited funds are available from the DfE.</p>	Headteacher
6	Chair of Trustees’ Report	
	<p>Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Board to the report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He thanked Mrs Linnell for her very significant support as Vice Chair, and reflected on the increased need for active partnership working between the Chair and Vice Chair.</p> <p>Mrs S Smith left the room while her appointment as the new Secretary to Trustees was discussed. Dr Bastin reported briefly on the selection process for the Secretary to the Trustees.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Proposed by Lt Col Dyer, seconded by Mr Merrett and unanimously agreed that Mrs Sam Smith should be appointed Secretary to the Trustees and Company Secretary with effect from 1 April 2017.</i></p> <p>He also reported briefly on the SWAT Headteachers’ and Directors’ meeting which he and Mrs Linnell had attended the previous day,</p>	

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	<p>including the session taken by a Leader of Governance from the National Governors' Association (NGA). He circulated a copy of the NGA, ASCL and NAHT document on what governing bodies should expect from school leaders. Mrs Linnell gave some further details of the conference, focusing in particular on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most boards represented have 12-16 trustees, although one has 24 • Most boards have only 2 elected parent trustees, but also advertise other trustee appointments among the parent community in order to maximise the opportunity to recruit trustees with the right mix of skills <p>Dr Bastin commented on the importance of the governing body challenging the school leadership effectively, and the need for trustees to develop a strong understanding of performance and other data to support this.</p>	ALL
7	Policies for Review	
	<p>Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Board to the following draft revised policies which had been circulated prior to the meeting:</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Proposed by Rev Dawson, seconded by Mr Davis and unanimously agreed that the following policies should be approved subject to the details noted below.</i></p>	
7(a)	<i>Accessibility Plan</i>	
	<p>Mr Cook reminded the Board of the requirement for a regularly reviewed Accessibility Plan, explaining that this version was a complete re-write of the former policy and so did not include tracked changes. Mr Goscomb drew attention to a minor typographical error.</p>	
7(b)	<i>Risk Management Policy</i>	
	<p>Mr Cook explained that this is a new policy to support the school's risk management procedures, as included in the Governance Review.</p>	
8	Governing Body Yearbook	
	<p>Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Board to the draft revised Governing Body Yearbook which had been circulated prior to the meeting, together with a summary of the changes from the previous version. He emphasised that the majority of changes arise from the implementation of the Governance Review recommendations agreed at the last two Board meetings.</p> <p>He highlighted the following sections in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of trustees formally satisfying themselves that 	

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	<p>the resolution of any concerns.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Proposed by Mr Sindall, seconded by Rev Dawson and unanimously agreed that the revised Governing Body Yearbook should be approved, subject to trustees accepting the revised section on Members which Mr Cook will circulate as soon as possible.</i></p>	Mr Cook
9	Funding Update	
	<p>Mr Harris drew attention to the section on Financial Leadership in the Headteacher's Performance Report (see Item 5) which compares the final funding allocations for 2017/18 recently received from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) with the funding projected in the current Five Year Budget Plan. Mr Harris indicated that while the financial situation remains very challenging, it should be possible to avoid major cuts for the 2017/18 financial year.</p> <p>Mr Harris suggested that there some indications that the government is prepared to re-visit the proposed National Funding Formula in the light of the very significant concerns expressed by schools, MPs, local authorities, parents and others. He commented on feedback from parents who have responded to the consultation in various ways.</p> <p>Mr Cook reminded trustees that the consultation on the National Funding Formula closes on Wednesday 22 March and Mr Sindall emphasised the importance of all trustees responding.</p>	ALL
10	Financial Statements: February 2017	
	<p>Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Committee to the Financial Statements for February 2017 which had been circulated prior to the meeting, including the detailed narrative.</p> <p>The Board expressed satisfaction with the Financial Statements for February 2017.</p>	
11	Responsible Officer's Report	
	<p>Miss Nickells drew the attention of the Committee to the report which had been circulated prior the meeting, reminding trustees of the new arrangements for Mr Laurence Evans, from The King's School, Ottery St Mary, to undertake this role on a reciprocal basis. It was noted that no issues had been raised.</p> <p>She also reported that the Finance and Resources Committee agreed to revise the Responsible Officer arrangements to include additional tests around governance and other areas identified in the EFA Academies Financial Handbook.</p>	Director of Finance and Resources
12	Stakeholder Engagement	

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	<p>Mr Cook reminded the Board that the Governance Review recommended that stakeholder engagement should be a standing item on the Board agenda from Spring 2017. The Review also proposed that trustees should be canvassed for initial ideas for improving stakeholder engagement. Trustees were asked to provide ideas to Mr Cook by 31 March 2017, in order that a report can be prepared for the next Board meeting in July.</p>	<p>ALL Secretary</p>
13	Lead Trustee Proposals	
	<p>Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Board to the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting which reflects a number of recommendations from the Governance Review.</p> <p>In response to Mrs Linnell, Mr Harris commented on the value of the Headteacher signing the proposed report <i>pro forma</i> as evidence that he is aware of any issues raised.</p> <p>Following a suggestion from Mrs Linnell it was agreed that Learning Walks (with a member of SLT or Head of Department) should be added as an example of trustee involvement.</p> <p>A number of changes were made to the proposed list of Lead Trustee areas, as detailed below.</p> <p>Trustees were asked to express an interest in a particular areas or areas to the Secretary by 31 March 2017, in order that a full Lead Trustee programme can be in place from the beginning of the summer term.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Proposed by Mrs Linnell, seconded by Mrs Wells and unanimously agreed that the proposals for the Lead Trustee programme should be approved, subject to the changes noted above and the revised Lead Trustee areas listed below. The proposals will be implemented from the beginning of the summer term, and included in the final version of the Governing Body Yearbook approved under Item 8.</i></p> <p><i>Lead Trustees areas:</i></p> <p><i>Grounds and Buildings</i></p> <p><i>Health and Safety</i></p> <p><i>School Support Functions</i></p> <p><i>Mathematics</i></p> <p><i>Science</i></p> <p><i>English</i></p> <p><i>Modern Foreign Languages</i></p> <p><i>Humanities (Mrs Wells expressed an interest in this area)</i></p> <p><i>IT, Technology and Business</i></p> <p><i>Expressive Arts</i></p> <p><i>Sport</i></p> <p><i>PSHE, Careers and Pastoral (including Pupil Premium)</i></p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>Secretary</p>

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	<p><i>SEND</i></p> <p><i>Safeguarding (already covered by Rev H Dawson, with Lt Col Dyer as the designated deputy)</i></p> <p><i>Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation (already covered by Rev H Dawson)</i></p>	
14	Link Trustee Reports	
	<p>Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Board to the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting containing reports for Business and Economics (Mrs L Linnell) and Science (Mr B Merrett).</p>	
15	Review Prize Giving Celebration Evening	
	<p>Dr Bastin asked the Board for their comments on the Prize Giving Celebration Evening held in the Cottrill Hall on Thursday 5 January 2017. A number of trustees commented very positively on the event, including the opportunity for students to meet together prior to the main awards event. Mrs Wells asked if the more personal information could be provided about students, for instance giving details about student destinations in the programme and possibly reducing the size of the groups being called up.</p> <p>Trustees commented positively on the music and drama presentations. Mr Harris reported on a comment in a recent parent survey about the lack of women from SLT taking part, and indicated that Mrs Harvey will be involved next year.</p> <p>It was suggested that former students would appreciate some guidance on the dress code for the evening.</p> <p>Following the strategy meeting held earlier in the day with the Development Officer, it was recognised that the Awards Ceremony has an important role to play in developing a sense of “lifelong” involvement and commitment to the school for both students and parents.</p>	<p>Headteacher</p>
16	Risk Register	
	<p>Dr Bastin and Mr Cook drew attention to the papers which had been circulated prior to the meeting as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) A paper explaining the Risk Register and suggesting key review questions (b) A Review Report showing the elements that have changed on the Risk Register since the last review. (c) The Risk Register, filtered to only show risks pertinent to the full Board and colour coded as previously agreed <p>Mr Cook drew attention to the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The uplifted likelihood for the two risks relating to potential 	

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	<p>competition from similar organisations and the possibility of a new selective school being opened under the government's new policy for the expansion of selective education. A new control requires the Board to be proactive in responding to the opportunities presented by the government's expansion policy.</p> <p>(b) The updating of the risk relating to the appointment of a replacement Business Manager/Director of Finance and Resources to reflect the induction and handover plan now in place.</p> <p>(c) The transfer of the upgraded risk relating to Data Protection Act changes in relation to the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in 2017/18 and the associated controls.</p> <p>(d) The reduced risk of being unable to recruit a suitable replacement Business Manager/Director of Finance and Resources, following Mr Lewis' appointment.</p>	
17	Safeguarding	
	<p>Rev Dawson reported on meetings with Mr Bush each half term, including conversations about the recent audit, training opportunities and a number of changes in procedures. She also reported on the appointment of Lt Col Dyer as Deputy Safeguarding Trustee at the recent meeting of the Admissions, Learning and Standards Committee.</p> <p>Rev Dawson also reported on her and Mr Scott's visit earlier in the day to check on reactions to visitors not wearing badges, and commented on the high level of awareness among younger years.</p> <p>Dr Bastin and Mr Harris drew the attention of the Board to the Security Review recently considered by the Finance and Resources Committee, and the associated works which will be completed during the Easter break. The majority of the proposals focus on ensuring proper separation of students and members of the public.</p>	
18	Committee Reports	
	<p>Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Board to the minutes of the following Committee meeting which have taken place since the last meeting of the Board and which had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p>	
18(a)	<i>Admissions, Learning and Standards Committee</i>	
	No comments.	
18(b)	<i>Finance and Resources Committee</i>	
	No comments.	
18(c)	<i>Staffing Committee</i>	

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	In response to Lt Col Dyer, Mr Harris confirmed that the Staffing Committee had not made a curriculum decision relating to subjects not running at A Level.	
19	Any Other Business	
19(a)	Deputy Headteacher	
	Mr Harris commented on the very significant contribution being made by Mr Gregson in his new role as Deputy Headteacher.	
	There was no other business	
20	Next Meeting	
	Training Evening – Wednesday 22 March 2017 at 6.30pm Board Meeting - Thursday 13 July 2017 at 6.30pm	

Signed:		(Chairman)
Date:		