



BOLDER ACADEMY
FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING MINUTES

Company Registered Number: 8932893

Chair: Andrew Dodge
Clerk: Rebecca Wilson (RW)
Date of meeting: 1st February 2022 at 8am
Venue: Remote meeting

Attendance:

Name	Governor	Other	Present / Apologies / Absent
Rob Collie (RC) ✓	Appointed by Trust		Present
Andrew Dodge (AD) ✓	Appointed by Trust		Present
Victoria Eadie (VE) ✓	Appointed by Trust	Also a Member	Present
Fran Heaphy (FH) ✓	Staff Governor		Present
Jo Killingley (JK)	Parent Governor		Present
Wendy Smith (WS) ✓	Appointed by Trust		Present
Heidi Swidenbank (HS) ✓	Ex-officio	Headteacher	Present
Eileen Sheedy (ES)	Appointed by Trust		Present
Birinder Tember (BT)	Parent Governor		Present
Kate Biant (KB)		School Business Manager	Present

The meeting was declared quorate.

Agenda item	Action
1. Apologies for absence	
All Governors were present.	
2. Declaration of interest	
No Governor declared an interest that may conflict with the meeting agenda.	
3. Minutes of previous meeting (7 Dec 21)	
The minutes (FGB, AGM, confidential) were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair and emailed for filing.	
4. Matters arising/actions	
The following point was outstanding:	
- Governor visit. <u>JK to visit the school in February to discuss the impact of the diversity workshops with students.</u>	JK
5. Headteacher verbal report	
Referring to Quality of Education , HS confirmed that the curriculum continues to be a strength. Year 9 are currently in the middle of their option and pathway choices, which has been supported by a parents evening and morning; attendance was not large. Currently about ten to twelve students in Year 9 will require a difference approach, which is being managed. A significant amount of CPD opportunities have run for middle leaders. This term the focus has been on Talk for Learning, with opportunities for co-planning extended beyond English and maths. Ross McGill is an education consultant who completed an inset with staff, providing strategies for Teaching and Learning. Teaching & Learning coaching and consultants have also been brought into school to help support ECT's. Next half term Assessment for Learning will be considered which will utilise middle leaders. HS shared the headlines from the assessments that took place before Christmas, including the need to continue to boost the progress of Pupil Premium students. Read Write Inc Fast Track is having a significant impact on the weakest readers and will continue having increased capacity.	
Q: A Governor queried the approach that will be taken with the 10 – 12 students highlighted in Year 9.	
A: HS explained that their needs are being explored and they may take a reduced number of GCSEs.	
HS highlighted that a lot of work has gone into Behaviour and Attendance . Staff feedback highlighted behaviour as a key consideration, which was followed up with a staff survey. Some changes to behaviour management are being implemented to clarify expectations, ensure consistency and simplify the administrative process. The school is also being supported by Andy Richardson who is on site three days a week supporting middle leaders. Mental health concerns have increased post lockdown, and Compass has been started, which provides a calm area for the most vulnerable students. It also seeks to address persistent absentees. Parent meetings are increasing, and every effort is being made to engage hard to reach parents.	
Q: A Governor asked if face to face or remote meetings were preferred with parents.	

A: HS confirmed that she had received mixed feedback and acknowledged the value of getting parents into school.

Regarding attitudes to learning, HS highlighted that the focus was on compliance. Students must take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour, which is a common issue across education. Attendance currently sits at 92.58%, with national at 82%. Several students are seeking additional support for mental health. HS confirmed that Covid peaked last week with fifty students and twelve members of staff off sick. Yesterday twenty nine students were off due to Covid. The school has moved to amber alert and are doing additional lateral flows on site. Amber alert means additional measures are put into place following Public Health Hounslow advice. Fixed term and internal exclusions have increased this term, following moves to minimise persistent lesson disruption. There is a clear escalation policy when students fail to turn up to Restorative Conversation Meetings. Further alternative support is being considered, noting an increase in counselling and play therapy.

Q: A Governor queried how behaviours were manifesting themselves.

A: The school tracks the number of detentions issued by groups (eg: Pupil Premium, SEN, gender, year group) as well as by individuals. Year 8 appears to have received the most detentions and SLT members are currently reviewing individuals and provision. Most detentions are now for low level disruption. This is a change since homework club was introduced.

Q: A Governor asked if attendance data included Covid absence.

A: There are a number of students who have been off with Covid and the after effects. As well as a number of students who are ill. Attendance is tracked closely. VE highlighted that come Covid is captured in absence data and HS confirmed that the school is closely tracking persistent absences.

Considering **Personal Development**, HS highlighted that a Being Bold day is coming up. Career talks and external speakers will engage online. Enrichment uptake is high, with only eleven students not engaging with anything; they are being actively encouraged to do so.

Referring to **Leadership and Management**, HS confirmed that the schools vision remains a key focus. Conversations with students are ongoing. The ECT programme has been revised, recognising the stress and workload on those involved. Student mobility is being closely tracked, with two recent managed moves into the school. One student in Year 9 is at Kingsley Academy. Considering alternative provision, one student is at the Lighthouse in Hammersmith as part of an EHCP assessment. Two students are on home tuition, one for medical reasons and the second due to EHCP assessment. Three students are at the Gateway for early intervention. The first PTA meeting took place recently, with twenty-five parents attending; it is hoped that this will grow over time. One Local Authority referral has been made by the DSL. This was the substance of a complaint to the ESFA who, after investigating, found that policies were fully compliant, and the school had taken all appropriate action. One subject access request has been received this half term. This was prepared but is yet to be collected. The school has successfully recruited ten teachers for next year due to the ongoing school expansion and also because some staff have left. Every effort is being made to actively retain staff, recognising that 1 in 6 teachers leave teaching in the first six years. The parents of current Year 9 have been surveyed. All responses were positive, less for two which are being followed up. A total of 34 responses were completed, out of a potential 180.

Q: A Governor asked HS to summarise the most positive areas and also the areas that were causing the greatest concern operationally.

A: HS highlighted that the impact and support regarding behaviour was positive, noting that the school was calmer. She also highlighted the impact on teaching and

learning through coaching. A significant concern is the lack of choice regarding alternative provision, other than The Gateway. Teaching and Learning is strong and embedded within the school, although it continues to be an area of focus.

Q: A Governor asked if The Gateway was a PRU.

A: HS explained that Woodbridge Park offers different levels of provision. It does have a PRU, noting that The Gateway provides early intervention.

Q: A Governor queried the relationship between Bolder and Woodbridge Park.

A: HS confirmed that it was fine, although the school is not seeing clear success in the students on their return, recognising the level of complex needs that are being managed.

Q: A Governor asked if Woodbridge Park offered in-school support to secondaries, which is an element that primaries can access.

A: HS confirmed that they did not.

FH outlined her perspective as a middle leader and expanded on the issue of staff retention.

6. Staff recruitment and retention

A wide-ranging discussion explored recruitment and retention in the national context and with the challenges of the pandemic, both within and outside education. The discussion focused very much on retention, including the following points:

- Most U.K. businesses have been affected by rising numbers of staff leaving their jobs voluntarily during 2021
- Many teachers questioning their choice of career since Covid with some comparing their job with peers in other careers working mainly at home
- They have worked extremely hard over the pandemic and this year has also been difficult due to staff and pupil absence
- More experienced teachers (e.g. UPS) tend to be more resilient and settled
- Newer teachers, especially those NQTs/ECTs starting during lockdown, were less resilient with some understandably really struggling
- School support staff are also exhausted having provided extensive additional support and some are considering alternative employment
- Bolder, being a new school, has a relatively high proportion of new/young teachers which makes it more vulnerable to staff deciding to change career
- The importance of making strong friendships with other staff has been shown to play a positive part in retention in schools

Governors shared and discussed various strategies and ideas including:

- The need to offer personalised strategies in retaining key staff
- The importance of exit interviews – carried out at Bolder by HR manager
- Being prepared to cancel/reduce activities spontaneously when responding to particularly stressful events/time periods
- Being able to work part-time/in a job share has been shown to be very effective in retaining staff

AD acknowledged the range of strategies discussed and summarised the actions:

- FH and WS will discuss staff retention when they meet.
- FH will consider staff retention more widely and feedback at the next meeting.
- Key personnel will be identified, and strategies will be personalised.
- Retention will be added to the Headteachers Report, recognising that it already captures staff who are leaving.

FH / WS
FH

HS
HS

7. Chair's report

AD confirmed that his report has been circulated and asked for questions.

8. Governor Training / Visits

WS highlighted that she was due to visit the school on 11 Feb 22. ES confirmed that she will complete a SEND visit prior to the next FGB.

WS
ES

9. Finance paperwork

RW confirmed that Governors have seen the finance paperwork up to December. RC highlighted that the surplus identified at the last meeting is being reduced and is reflected in the management accounts.

10. Policies

Governors ratified the following policies with the underlined changes noted:

- Attendance of students with additional health needs – change review date to 2024
- Charging & Remissions (Feb 22)
- Governors Code of Conduct (Feb 22)
- Policy for the Education of Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (2022). AD outlined the main changes. Typo, page 4, 'who are'
- Risk Management Policy (Feb 22)
- SEND Information Report 2022 – edit footer
- SEND Local Offer (2022) – no footer and three blank pages at the end
- SEND Policy (2022)
- Whole School Pay Policy (2022 v2) – Browne Jacobson policy, noting that all comments are accepted.

HS

HS

HS
HS

AD confirmed that the Board supported the delegation of the Charging and remissions Policy to the FAR Committee.

11. AOB

AD confirmed the meetings for the remainder of the year:

- May FGB – on site
- June FGB – virtual
- June development session – on site

VE requested that as many meetings as possible be virtual, recognising the possibility of a hybrid approach. HS asked that Governor's personal emails be circulated to KB and HS. RW confirmed that she will check the email details held by the NGA for RC, noting that he does not receive the weekly bulletin.

RW
RW

Next meeting date

- Tue 29 Mar 22 at 8am, at Bolder Academy

Meeting ended at 9:20 am.

Signature: Andrew Dodge

Name of Chair: ANDREW DODGE

Date: 29/03/2022