



BOLDER ACADEMY
FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING MINUTES

Company Registered Number: 8932893

Chair: Victoria Eadie

Clerk: Rebecca Wilson (RW)

Date of meeting: 30th January 2024 at 8:00am

Venue: Remote meeting

Attendance:

Name	Governor	Other	Present / Apologies / Absent
Rajiv Chandra (RC)	Appointed by Trust		Present
Silvia Del Corso (SDC)	Parent Governor		Present
Victoria Eadie (VE)	Appointed by Trust	Also a Member	Present
Andrew McCaffer (AM)	Appointed by Trust		Present
Wendy Smith (WS)	Appointed by Trust		Present
Heidi Swidenbank (HS)	Ex-officio	Headteacher	Present
Carin Thakrar (CT)	Parent Governor		Present
Kate Biant (KB)		School Business Manager	Present
Greg George (GG)		Finance Director	Present
Adam Bones (AB)		Deputy Head	Present
Jonny Hurn (JH)		AHT 6 th Form	Present

The meeting was declared quorate.

Agenda item	Action
<p>1. Apologies for absence</p> <p>VE welcomed SDC to the meeting as the newly elected Parent Governor. She also explained that Fran Heaphy had left the school and less for the Headteacher, staff can no longer sit on the Board. In addition, Eileen Sheedy had resigned as a Governor. Noting these changes, VE confirmed that all Governors were present.</p>	
<p>2. Declaration of interest</p> <p>No one declared an interest that may conflict with the meeting agenda.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of previous meeting (5 Dec 23)</p> <p>The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at a later date.</p>	
<p>4. Matters arising/actions</p> <p>The following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governor recruitment. VE confirmed that Governor recruitment was a priority. WS highlighted that she had engaged with Inspiring Governors and had initiated a template; <u>VE and WS will meet to finalise engagement with Inspiring Governors.</u> <u>RW confirmed that she will circulate the recruitment advert used by Andrew Dodge.</u> The value of recruiting a primary head was acknowledged, and <u>HS confirmed that she will consider possible Headteachers that VE could approach.</u> - Safeguarding training. <u>RW confirmed that she will resend the safeguarding training link, which all Governors should complete.</u> 	<p>VE/WS RW HS/VE</p> <p>RW All Govs</p>
<p>5. Membership</p> <p>Covered at Item 4.</p>	
<p>6. Update to Model Articles of Association</p> <p>VE explained that it was a good time to consider adopting the Model Articles of Association, which would impact on the structure of the Board. GG highlighted the need to add a clause to the objects at the same time. It was agreed that <u>VE and GG will review the Articles and send them to the lawyers to confirm and finalise.</u> VE confirmed that on principal, the Board was happy to adopt the latest Model Articles of Association. She highlighted a possible conflict between Members and Trustees, and it was also agreed that <u>the impact on Members will be considered.</u></p>	<p>VE/GG</p> <p>VE/GG</p>
<p>7. 7.1 Headteacher's Report: Sixth Form Update</p> <p>JH confirmed that 40 students had Joined the Sixth form, with 34 from Bolder and 6 joining through the Sprots Academy; the breakdown of the cohort was further outlined. Bolder offers fourteen courses at Sixth Form, with twelve A levels and two vocational subjects (applied science and applied sport). 70% of students are studying A Level, with the remainder including a vocational option in their subject choice. A baseline assessment has taken place and course selection has been reviewed. Mid-year assessments have also taken</p>	

place and exams are planned for the end of the year. A data summary of the Sixth Form was shared, with value added at -0.44. JH acknowledged that this is early in the school year and emphasised the importance of ensuring that students do not become complacent. Data was further outlined by subject, and JH expanded on the subject choices made by students. Value added data was also shared and was broken down by ethnicity and other groups. Data review meetings have been scheduled and intervention plans will be implemented. This includes extended school on Friday and supervised silent study. Training and moderation are also a focus at this stage, conscious that the Sixth Form is new. Looking at student recruitment for next year, JH confirmed that 86 applications had been received: 54 internal; 32 external. JH outlined the engagement to date and highlighted a desire for a wider breadth of subjects, to include psychology and business, noting that the recent open evening was successful. He also confirmed the next steps and highlighted that a marketing consultant has been engaged and will consider the Sixth Form. JH also outlined planning regarding Bolder Futures. He shared successes to date and confirmed the areas of focus for the second half of the year.

Q: A Governor queried if external interest was in line with expectations.

A: JH confirmed that the school is aspiring for 80 students next year, with 20/25 external. VE highlighted the importance of ensuring commitment and buy in is maintained with external applicants and acknowledged that the Sixth Form has had a very positive start.

Q: A Governor asked what the Board can do to support.

A: JH highlighted the value of Governors engaging with student voice. RC and AM confirmed that they will support with this, and AM will complete a H&S walk at the same time.

RC/AM

7.2 Headteacher's Report: Coursework

AB acknowledged that last year the Year 11 coursework did not have the desired impact and confirmed that this year the focus throughout the school relates to how to maximise grades through coursework. AB expanded on this point and gave feedback by subject. He outlined on the approach taken and support provided for PE, noting that the Head of Department is on long term sick. He also acknowledged that the deadline for DT was tight, recognising staff pressures. AB confirmed that most students are in a good position, and reiterated the need to support staff and students regarding PE and DT.

Q: A Governor requested further feedback regarding PE and DT.

A: AB confirmed that he was confident regarding both subjects but acknowledged that DT will be closer to the deadline and acknowledged the level of support required.

Q: A Governor asked if the school had technicians.

A: AB confirmed that one technician covered art and DT, recognising that they are more of an art specialist.

Referring to sports science, AB confirmed that further interventions were required, and staff needed to be upskilled. VE acknowledged that the school was in a better position than last year, and AB confirmed that the situation was broadly positive, with a few areas that required further support. He also highlighted the importance of ensuring that predictions were accurate. The February mock exams will further inform predictions and staff have also received CPD in this area. AB highlighted that students now receive two effort grades, focusing inside and outside the classroom.

7.3 Headteacher's Report: SEND

AB confirmed that SEND is an ongoing focus across the school, with staff CPD offered on Wednesday after school. There is also the opportunity for after school workshops. SEND is a constant focus at line manager meetings with heads of department. AB acknowledged that

for some students there is a disconnect between the subject focus which favours EBacc, and the more creative subjects which it has been a challenge to recruit against. This is particularly relevant for Year 10, noting that they missed the Year 6 to 7 transition. Year 10 assessments will take place shortly, which will provide greater clarity.

Q: A Governor queried the curriculum offer and highlighted that EBacc was not suited to some students, and asked if there was value of focusing on BTEC subjects instead.

A: AB confirmed the school has not been so prescriptive regarding subject choices, and last year reached out to West Thames. The school has also looked to recruit a wider subject offer, but this has not been possible.

VE highlighted the possibility of specific students dropping a subject in order to receive greater support with core subjects, emphasising that students must not become totally disengaged. AB confirmed that a large proportion of Year 10 have taken three subjects.

Q: A Governor asked if there are any year groups lower down the school that also require consideration.

A: AB confirmed that other year groups are not a concern, and Year 10 is an anomaly.

Q: A Governor highlighted that suspension and attendance figures were lower than the Borough average, and asked if there was a specific issue with Year 10.

A: HS explained that suspension data was two years out of date. She also confirmed that other schools were finding Year 10 challenging due to the legacy impact of the pandemic, which is compounded by the needs of this specific cohort.

7.4 Headteacher's Report: School data

AB expanded on the 4Matrix data, which had been shared in summary. In November Progress 8 scored +0.08, and attainment was shared by subject, recognising that further detail will be built up over time. Mock results will be reviewed at the next meeting, and 4 Matrix will also be considered in further detail. Governors confirmed that they would appreciate greater detail at the next meeting, and valued the feedback provided. Governors considered the infographics data and asked that Liz Green come to a later meeting to provide more detailed feedback and outline any action plans.

RW
(Agenda)

RW
(Agenda)

7.5 Headteacher's Report: General update

HS referred to her report and asked for questions.

Q: A Governor noted guidance provided by Browne Jacobson regarding triggering of governor engagement, linked to the number of days suspended.

A: HS confirmed that no student has entered this bracket, and VE explained that this data is summarised on SIMS.

HS confirmed that the pastoral structure has evolved over the years, with additional layers created to ensure the required level of support. She expanded on the current structure and highlighted areas of focus, recognising that early intervention is a priority. VE acknowledged the impact of long term sickness on staff and queried the impact on the pastoral support team. HS expanded on the support provided and acknowledged that parental engagement can be challenging. This impacts disproportionately on the pastoral and SEND teams, as well as the SLT. HS confirmed that there has been a great deal of reflection regarding this point, and the SLT is working strategically to support staff. She also acknowledged that parental complaints and concerns have a significant impact on staff. VE acknowledged that it takes time to build relationships with the more challenging parents. HS expanded on the thought that has gone into these issues, and highlighted national concerns include the mental health of school leaders and the impact of parental complaints. She expanded on the approach to recruitment against leadership roles, recognising the support provided and the ongoing focus on retention. The coach that has been received has been extremely valuable, and the

school is aware of the challenges being managed. HS also highlighted the need to think more radically to support recruitment and retention. AM queried if there was value in having a time limited approach to the more challenging roles, with posts managed on rotation. HS acknowledged the level of mental health concerns which are linked to Occupational Health referrals. This point was discussed in further detail, and the value of effective de-escalation with parents was also acknowledged.

Q: A Governor queried a rise in suspensions.

A: HS confirmed that this related to a specific incident.

VE highlighted that Governors needed to be aware of the high number of SEND and Pupil Premium students who are suspended.

7.6 Headteacher's Report: HR report

Q: A Governor queried the level of probation leavers, recognising the impact last year.

A: HS confirmed that she was managing two leavers. One was on promotion to Assistant Head and the second was leaving for geographical reasons. She also highlighted that there were no early probation leavers.

Q: A Governor acknowledged the value in having young staff, and asked if there were any concerns regarding retention.

A: AB confirmed that the school has five Teach First teachers. He confirmed that there was no concern regarding progress, and it is anticipated that they will remain at the school for at least a couple of years.

AB also explained that Teach First will change their approach next year, with an increase in fees and mentoring requirement. The commitment has also reduced to one year, and staff may decide to complete the ECT programme with another school. There are twelve teachers across the ECT programme, noting that none are at risk. HS emphasised that this is a strong cohort. She also highlighted that with two leavers from the English Department, it has been necessary to amend the timetable, so the school is now managing one vacancy against English. HS further outlined vacancies and confirmed that recruitment was challenging. The school sets high standards, and some adverts have no applicants. Staff also use the teacher shortage to secure higher salaries, which is compounded by the higher wage band for Ealing. VE confirmed that there was a national crisis regarding teacher recruitment and retention and expanded on this point.

Q: A Governor queried the wider offer to teachers, which can support recruitment.

A: HS outlined the approach taken and confirmed that the school is working with a marketing consultant. She acknowledged that the market was saturated and reiterated the importance of taking a different approach.

VE confirmed that workload and wellbeing is a key consideration for staff, and it was suggested that teachers share why they like the school on the website to support recruitment. Recruitment and retention were discussed in further detail, and Governors recognised that this required ongoing consideration.

Q: A Governor referred to the report and queried reference to a mum exploring home education and alternative provision.

A: HS emphasised that the school does not encourage home education, noting that this point is being addressed.

Q: A Governor queried pupil numbers, noting that in year admissions appeared to be lower.

A: HS expanded on the data.

VE confirmed that pupil numbers were better than last year but are lower than the budget forecast. She suggested that Governors meet before the next FAR to agree areas of focus. Governors also considered the feedback from the parent survey and suggested that written comments could also be shared. HS confirmed that written comments had been summarised and shared.

VE / HS

8. Chair's Report

VE confirmed that she had nothing further to highlight.

9. Governor training and visits

WS highlighted that she had met with the SENDCo and had also completed IRP training.

10. Finance paperwork

RW confirmed that Governors have seen the finance paperwork up to December.

11. Policies

Governors ratified the following policies:

- SEND Information Report
- SEND Local Offer
- SEND Policy
- Education of LAC
- Careers education and access policy
- Children missing or absent from education
- CP and Safeguarding Policy – minor updates

12. AOB

GG highlighted a 10% increase against the catering contract which takes effect after half term and ensures the school remains at net zero subsidy. Lettings management will also be brought in house from 3 Feb 24, with limited financial liability. This impacts on three members of staff. One will TUPE over, noting that two are on zero hours contracts. Governors discussed the impact of TUPE in further detail.

Next meeting date

- Tue 26 March 2024 at Bolder Academy

Meeting ended at 10:30 am.

Signature:

**Name of
Chair:**

Date:
