

York High School

Minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Board held on Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 6pm held at the school

Present: Rod Sims (Headteacher) Val Roddis
Nicki Mitchell (Chair) Sally Gordon
Ian Savage Richard Lavell
Sarah Hammond

In Attendance Clare Besant (potential governor), Sophie Triffitt (Clerk)

Action

1. **Welcome, Apologies for absence, Declarations of Interest**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr Waller, Andy Pope and Amanda Crouch.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 19th March 2024** (previously circulated)

Resolution: The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and approved.

Matters Arising and Action Plan

Action 1: Governors were reminded to complete required training.

Action 2: Claire Besant was in attendance as a potential parent governor.

3. **Headteacher Report / Weekly Pulse**

The Headteacher tabled the Pulse reports for WC 29th April 2024 and, as a comparison, WC 8th May 2023.

The Headteacher highlighted the overall attendance position of 85.26% an improvement on 84.6% on the same period the previous year.

The persistent absence (PA) rate was reporting an improved position at 36.91% compared to 42.13% the previous year. There had been a significant improvement for four children whose attendance had moved out of PA.

The Headteacher noted that the YTD Year 11 attendance at 80% was in line with the previous year. The Headteacher informed governors that the current Year 11 cohort had 144 students of which 30 had attendance below 70% and 20 had attendance below 50% and explained the difficulties of the good curriculum and quality of teaching to impact the progress of young people not attending.

The Headteacher explained Progress 8 (P8) and noted that at its worst P8 had been -0.97 and at its best, through Covid, was +0.17. The prediction for this year was -0.57.

The Headteacher reported that at York High School students with attendance:

- above 95% were predicted +0.25 or higher
- 90% or above were predicted +0.17
- above 80% still achieve a positive P8 which demonstrates the impact of the good curriculum and teaching.
- below 70% were predicted -2.89

Challenge: A governor questioned the Year 10 Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) attendance of 57%. The Headteacher explained that those children with an EHCP had the highest level of need and given the small cohort size of 12 individual cases had a statistically greater impact on the data. The PP and SEND cohorts were not reporting improvements in line with the non PP / SEND peers but support was in place in line with need.

4. **School Improvement Plan (SIP)**

The Headteacher tabled a draft 2024/25 SIP SWOT analysis.

Challenge: A governor asked why Inspire Academy was an opportunity. The Headteacher explained the positive impact Inspire had on:

- permanent exclusion rate (7 in 2022/23 and 2 YTD 2023/24).
- reduction from 40% to 4% of alternative provision places taken up by York High students in the city.
- KS3 through the turnaround programme.

- KS4 children retained in the Trust with a sense of community and having access to good teaching.
- Reduced number of children with need moving to other mainstream schools in the city.

The success and impact of the provision had been recognised in the city.

Challenge: A governor asked if there was limited access to Inspire. The Headteacher explained that there were conversations underway with the CEO around the funding model and place allocation.

Challenge: A governor asked for further detail on the move to KS3 mixed ability curriculum. The Headteacher explained that the opportunity was being taken to move to mixed ability classes as the Year 7 and new year groups move up through school. Maths would remain set. The decision was based in research from the Education Endowment Foundation that reports a possible -1 month impact on the highest ability students but was positive on middle and lower abilities with a +3 month impact. Curriculum development work was done in the lead up to Ofsted and the implementation of mixed ability provides an opportunity to build on and celebrate a dynamic curriculum.

Challenge: A governor asked if there would be a reinforcement of extracurricular opportunities for those at the top end of those classes to mitigate the possible minus month impact. The Headteacher explained that enrichment opportunities were being relaunched with middle leaders to build in opportunities for students and assured governors that the curriculum would include challenge questions to engage and challenge the higher ability.

Challenge: A governor asked if there was a link with the identified threat of higher ability students leaving. The Headteacher explained that there had been four students who left but reasons were linked to bullying and friendship issues, not teaching and learning. If a student was lost to another school then that was felt as a failure and a sign that school could do something better.

The Headteacher tabled a draft SIP Yearly Plan.

Challenge: A governor noted the resistance to change threat and asked if that was related to a specific group. The Headteacher explained that it was included within leadership as part of the transition of the Headteacher and a need to ensure effective communication around this for all stakeholders.

Challenge: A governor asked if there was a priority order for the SIP. The Headteacher explained that the format was in line with the Ofsted strands and that attendance was the highest priority then outcomes, all other priorities lead into those two strands.

Challenge: In response to a governor the Headteacher expected that the SIP would be reported back to governors through a RAG rating system but that would need to be agreed with the new school leader.

5. Teaching and Learning

There was no update to report.

6. Standards

The link governor had made a visit and would circulate a report.

The link governor reported on a thoroughness and detail in tracking of each student.

There was discussion on the impact of increased classroom teaching time for leaders which impacts capacity and workload. The Headteacher explained that teaching hours tend to be fairly consistent across most schools. Previously York High had a small Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and now there was a larger SLT. The Headteacher gave an example of an increase in teaching time from ten lessons to 25 lessons a fortnight for some. The Headteacher explained the financial efficiencies measured through Curriculum Led Financial Planning and the benchmark of 0.79 of teaching staff time should be in the classroom. York High was currently at 0.77 so below that benchmark. The Headteacher understood that additional time would be desirable for individuals who want to do the best job.

As part of the visit the link governor had an update on Progress Teaching. The Headteacher explained that the trust executive team have worked closely with Progress Teaching to design a platform that works for both the school and wider trust.

Checkpoint Data

There was no data for review.

7. Governing Body Matters

Governor Visits and Training (previously circulated)

The clerk referred governors to the gaps in governor training.

Cllr Waller had completed Disadvantaged Pupils - Funding, Support and Monitoring Impact training on 25th April 2024.

8. **Child Protection and Safeguarding**

The link governor had a meeting scheduled for Friday 10th May 2024 and would submit a report.

9. **Attendance and Behaviour** (previously circulated)

Attendance

The attendance link governor report had been circulated.

The link governor highlighted that, although there have been slight improvements, attendance remains an area of focus. The centrepiece of the work was the data made available to staff to focus work, support and intervention to address barriers and keep students on a positive attendance trajectory. The link governor had seen examples of personalised messages generated for individual targets for individual improvement.

There was a pilot mentoring programme with York University, out of the 28 young people invited four attended the first session which the Deputy Headteacher was pleased with.

The Deputy Headteacher and link governor discussed the potential risks to feed up to the central team and it was identified that a lot of work was being done at weekends by the Deputy Headteacher and School Improvement Partner which the link governor felt could not be relied on. Given the complex piece of work the link governor suggested some form of internal audit.

There was a move to use form tutors for attendance 'nudge and praise'.

The Headteacher explained the approach developed by the Deputy Headteacher to pyramid meetings to identify levels of need and reasons for non-attendance to deliver individualised support that school can offer and cases of complex needs that need engagement with the LA.

The link governor noted that the Deputy Headteacher had some concerns on recent announcements by the Local Authority, that some families should not be fined, was too broad an approach and would in some cases hinder the drive to improve attendance. The Headteacher added that the approach could be discriminatory as all children have the same right to an education and an apathy from parents to education should be challenged and the tool of a fine should be available for circumstances where it would be appropriate.

Challenge: A governor asked if there was anything governors could do to support the attendance priority work. The link governor confirmed not at this stage and explained that the work and level of sophistication of the structures and resources provides reassurance to governors that staff have done everything possible. **Governors recorded appreciation for all the work to address attendance.**

Behaviour

The behaviour link governor met with the Senior Pastoral Leader on 20th February 2024 and would submit a report.

The link governor summarised some of the headlines from the meeting:

- Inspire was alleviating pressures of recidivism in KS4. There was a particular cohort in KS3 that were still struggling to regulate. There was a reduction in suspensions and an increase in attendance. There was a plan for Year 9's to access Inspire for September.
- The York High Way was amended to include real world scenarios and staff buy in was good.
- A new School Council initiative had been launched. The Headteacher noted that they had met for the first time.

The link governor had asked about the Headteacher leaving and the Senior Pastoral Leader emphasised the support they had received from the Headteacher and had concerns that there would be a vacuum with the Headteacher leaving.

The Headteacher presented suspension tracking data to demonstrate the significant reduction in suspensions on the previous year and informed governors that the Senior Pastoral Leader had done excellent work this year on implementing a staged approach and reasonable adjustments to incidents of behaviour.

10. Special Needs

There was no update to report.

11. Pupil Premium

The link governor had met with the Headteacher and also discussed SEN transition with Westfield Primary School and building that relationship.

12. Staffing Update

The Headteacher provided an update on the Executive Headteacher recruitment explaining that no candidate was appointed after two rounds of recruitment and the decision had been taken to recruit a Head of School.

Challenge: Governors noted the potential anxiety for staff with a lack of clear leadership and emphasised the need for effective communication.

Challenge: A governor asked about the impact to the budget if the long-term plan was to have an Executive Headteacher and Head of School. The Headteacher explained that if there was a Head of School with no Executive Head, then there would be financial savings for the budget and Inspire line management would continue to sit with the Director of SEND and Safeguarding. The Headteacher explained that the contributions from the school budget to the Trust supports access to significantly more support and guidance from the executive team which was beyond the support available as a maintained school.

Challenge: A governor asked what the plan was if an appointment was not made. The Headteacher explained that if an appointment was not made on this round of recruitment then the deadline for a September start would be missed. The executive team would be planning a contingency.

The Headteacher informed governors that recruitment would be needed for:

- SENCO
- Head of Year Pastoral Leader
- Teacher of Science
- Teacher of English

Challenge: A governor asked for an update on the ECT programme retention. The Headteacher explained that two strong ECTs (Science and English) were leaving due to relocation, but both were complimentary about the school.

13. Finance Update

Link Governor Report (previously circulated)

The link governor explained that he meets regularly with the SBM and CFO and reported that the Trust had moved to a new finance system that includes revised projections each month and negates the need for a six-month revised budget. The SBM was in the early stages of planning the 2024/25 budget and the link governor had a meeting scheduled to review the budget for submission to the Trust for approval and would update governors.

The link governor explained that Inspire was part funded by the Local Authority (£79K for the current financial year) but that funding would not be in place next year. The projected costs to fund the provision for 2024/25 was £89k from Millthorpe and £171k from York High budgets.

The link governor highlighted that the early plans project a £94k in year deficit next year.

The Headteacher noted the significant impact to the budget if pay rises were not fully funded.

Financial Summary (previously circulated)

The link governor presented period 7 report and noted the 2.7% reserve against a trust desired target of 6/7% which was in line with industry guidance.

Forecast Summary (previously circulated)

The link governor presented the forecast summary report.

Governors recorded thanks to the link governor for the oversight on finances and update to governors.

Governors recorded thanks to the SBM for the quality of his work.

14. Community

Energise Report – Spring 2024 (previously circulated)

There were no questions on the circulated report.

15. York High Families

There was no update to report.

16. School Policies

Home School Agreement (previously circulated)

Resolution: Governors approved the Home School Agreement.

Challenge: A governor asked if there was a way of tracking that the agreements are signed.

Action: Headteacher to arrange with the Senior Pastoral Leader to have tutors check home school agreement are signed. HT

Homework Policy (previously circulated)

Resolution: Governors approved the Homework Policy subject to the policy referencing expectations on the school to reflect the partnership between school and home.

Challenge: A governor suggested exploring a way of providing more three-dimensional feedback on the students.

ECT Induction Arrangements (previously circulated)

Resolution: Governors approved the ECT Induction Arrangements.

Exam Policies (previously circulated)

Resolution: Governors approved the Word Processor Policy and Exam Contingency Plan.

17. Risk Record

There was no update to report.

18. MAT Business

Governors were reminded of the governance sessions on SEND and Safeguarding.

19. Any Other Business

There were no items for AOB.

20. Future Meeting Dates

Thursday 11th July 2024 – 6pm

Resolution: Governors agreed to have six meetings next academic year.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.

Approved at LGB on 11th July 2024.

Approval

| <u>ACTION POINTS</u> | | | | |
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| <u>From the meeting of the Local Governing Board held on 7th May 2024</u> | | | | |
| | <u>ACTION</u> | <u>ITEM</u> | <u>WHO</u> | <u>WHEN</u> |
| 1. | Governors to complete Child Protection in Education training. | 9 (05.12.23) | Amanda Crouch Ian Savage | Jan 2024 |
| 2. | Arrange with the Senior Pastoral Leader to have tutors check home school agreement are signed. | 16 | Headteacher | |

July meeting:

Future meeting:

Student Wellbeing Leaders