

# Archway School: Full Governing Body Meeting

Minutes of Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019

- Present:** Colin Belford **CB**, Nigel Cooper, Anne-Marie Delrosa, Natasha Rolls, Sarah Warner, Pam Swindell, Martin Ansell, Gavin Townsend, Anna Ellis, Alan Potter, Barnes Clutterbuck, Christopher Berry, George Butcher, Dominic Salmon **DS** (Deputy Head)
- Apologies:** Suzanne Ryder, Georgia Boon, Julie Brindle and members of the SLT (Kay Young, Julian Young, Rachel O'Bryan)

## 1. **Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from Suzanne Ryder, Georgia Boon, Julie Brindle and members of the SLT.

## 2. **Declarations of Prejudicial Interest**

There were none.

## 3. **Minutes from previous FGB Meeting and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the previous FGB meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

### **Matters Arising**

**Action: in response to concerns expressed about incidents of verbal abuse towards members of staff, the home/school agreement will, in future, include a statement emphasizing the school's zero tolerance towards aggressive or abusive behaviour from parent or members of the public. CB will also write to parents in Term 6 making the zero tolerance policy clear and ensuring that a poster is put up in the main reception emphasizing the school's expectations regarding this matter.**

**CB** (headteacher) informed governors that a warning letter regarding abusive language/behaviour already exists which makes it clear that should there be any repetition of such behaviour, individuals (parents/members of the public) will be banned from any contact with the school other than with members of the SLT and strictly by appointment.

A governor asked whether the reception staff are sufficiently protected from potential abuse and wondered if the installation of a panic button was necessary, especially as there have been occasions when the police have had to be involved in confrontational incidents. **CB** explained that it is important that the school maintains an appropriate balance between being a welcoming institution and ensuring appropriate protection for frontline staff. He emphasised that reception staff are not lone workers because there are always other staff in the vicinity but agreed that the situation should be monitored.

**Action: the strategies used to support Heads of Department in their leadership role are to be an agenda item at a future FGB meeting** . **FUTURE AGENDA ITEM**

**Action; AL is to arrange an autumn date for the in-house Exclusions training.**

## 4. **Headteacher's Report**

The Headteacher's Report had been circulated prior to the meeting. At the meeting, the following points were also made:

### **IMPACT**

Following the governing body's recommendation that wherever possible, the school's budget surplus should be used to enhance the teaching and learning experiences for the students, a decision has been taken to plan for 6 forms of entry with the September Y7 intake to alleviate

pressure on class sizes. If numbers drop following the grammar schools appeals process, the arrangement will stay in place for 2019 – 20 but a decrease to 5 forms of entry would be considered for the following year as the students move into Y8.

**CB** gave details of the current advertisements for teaching posts and the expanded EWO (educational welfare officer) role.

**DS** gave a summary of the current KS4 and KS5 predictions. He explained that Y13 progress and attainment are similar to last year. Y11 Predictions for 4+ and 5+ in English and Maths are low. Progress 8 is likely to be below the cohort target at -0.5. **DS** drew attention to the fact that the eleven students from the current Y11 cohort who are being educated elsewhere (hospital or alternative provision) and this will have a negative - 0.24 impact on Progress 8. If the school slips below this figure, it is likely that Ofsted would visit earlier than the predicted March 2020.

**DS** felt confident that the Y11 predictions are far more secure than they have been in previous years due to the considerable amount of external validation and checking that has been put in place over the past six months. If this year's results match predictions, it will indicate that the validation processes have been effective, in which case they will be used again and broadened to use with other year groups.

In response to a governor query about whether this Y11 cohort's experience has justified the school's decision to adopt a three year KS4, it was agreed that an evaluation by the Curriculum Committee should take place in the early autumn once the summer results are available. Ofsted has expressed reservations and does not advocate starting GCSEs in Year 9 as a suitable approach. **CB** also drew attention to the fact that Ofsted regards the EBacc as the aspirational curriculum offer which all schools should promote and will continue to use it as a performance measure. This has implications for the school because many Archway students do not currently opt for the EBacc range of subjects at KS4.

**Action: in response to a governor request, the next headteacher's report will include information about the number of students who have joined/left Archway during the year as well as details about where they have gone ( including those who have elected home education).**

## 5. Committee Reports

*(Minutes of all the recent committee meetings had been circulated prior to the FGB meeting: key points below)*

### **Chairs' Group**

- The points raised in Tony Bloxham's visit had been discussed.
- Next steps regarding the Strategic Plan and Stakeholder involvement had been discussed.
- The next meeting is scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> June. Any governors who would like to attend should contact **AD** or **AL**.

### **Finance & Staffing Committee**

- The FGB was informed that the committee had reviewed the Bursary, Staff Grievance, Redundancy, and Data Protection policies. A small change had been made to the Bursary policy to ensure compliance with new government guidelines; there had been no changes to the other policies.
- The FGB approved the Governors' Budget Statement for 2019/20. **NC** congratulated **HM** (Business Manager) and **CB** on managing to create an end of year surplus in difficult circumstances given the national uncertainty over school funding allocations. However, attention was drawn to the fact that whilst there is a carry forward into 2020, there is a projected deficit of £400,000 by April 2021 which increases to £1.4 million by April 2022.

## **Curriculum Committee**

- **PS** drew attention to the new Curriculum Statement which had been included as an appendix to the minutes of the last meeting.

## **Welfare & Discipline Committee**

- The FGB was informed that the committee had reviewed the Physical Intervention and Equalities policies. Minor changes had been made to both.
- Julian Young (Assistant Head) is to visit other schools to investigate their approaches to attendance monitoring.
- Behaviour has been identified as a major concern.

## 9. **Feedback from Stakeholder Meetings**

Prior to the meeting, governors had been emailed feedback from the following stakeholder surveys and focus group meetings:

- *Annual online staff survey*
- *Students focus group discussions*
- *Two Parents focus group meetings*
- *Two Staff focus group meetings*

**AD** gave a summary of the key issues. All agreed that discipline/behaviour was the most important issue facing the school community. It was acknowledged that staff are faced with an increasing number of challenging students with complex issues at a time when there is significantly less support from external agencies such as social services.

With regard to discipline, a governor expressed concern that very often disruptive behaviour appears to be tolerated for a prolonged period of time - sometimes 18 months – with numerous interventions put in place before a permanent exclusion is decided on. **CB** replied that schools are under a great deal of pressure at a county and national level not to exclude students and Archway has had exclusions being over-turned, with the local authority taking the view that not enough had been done by the school to prevent an exclusion becoming necessary.

After a lengthy discussion involving input from all governors, the following priority areas were identified:

- *Discipline/BfL system/Behaviour*
- *Improving engagement with parents as partners*
- *Ensuring that there is a clear understanding of expectations by parents, students and staff*
- *Improving students' positive engagement with the school ( 'buying in' to what it has to offer so more students feel 'I want to be here' rather than 'I have to be here')*
- *Strengthening the school's identity within the community*
- *Challenging staff as well as supporting them and involving them in changes*
- *Ensuring consistency in expectations and standards*

**CB** then outlined the SLT's plans, which have been developed over the past few months with the support of the external consultant, Tony Bloxham. Priorities are as follows:

- *A focus on improving behaviour.*
- *Removing burdensome tasks for staff.*
- *Improving a sense of ownership through greater consultation with staff.*
- *The SLT to undertake research and visits to other schools to identify potentially successful strategies.*

- *The morning routine is to be tightened up. CB outlined the plans for a new reading programme for Y7 – Y10 which is intended to support literacy and provide an ordered, silent start to the day.*
- *All lessons are to start with an activity to encourage short term memory recall.*
- *BfL in its current form is to be replaced with a new approach to disruption-free learning. The new procedure will involve students being removed from lessons for 2 hours if, after a warning, unacceptable behaviour is repeated. Staff are to be consulted about this new approach over the next few weeks and parents contacted in readiness for the start of the new school year.*
- *Lesson observations are to be carried out with each member of the teaching staff every two weeks. The SLT will make it explicitly clear whether the purpose of the observation is monitoring or supporting. Follow-up to observations will involve just one manageable action point.*
- *The policy on mobile phones will be a ‘see it, lose it’ zero tolerance approach.*
- *Heads and Assistant Heads of Key Stage 3 and 4 are to be located in the same place to improve communication and consistency of approach.*

In response to a governor query, CB agreed that rewarding good behaviour must be a central part of the establishment of disruption-free learning.

**Action: CB will provide governors with a time line related to the proposed changes to school procedures following the extensive stakeholder consultation. There will be a review of progress at the the FGB meeting. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM.**

**Action: AD is to organise a further session to discuss next steps in developing a new Strategic Plan. This will be facilitated by external consultant Vicki Redding.**

### 13. Election of New Governors

Three new co-opted governors, Christopher Berry, George Butcher and Julie Brindle, were elected onto the governing body. Their election was proposed by NR, seconded by AE and agreed by all present.

### 17. AOB

AD will contact all governors by email to arrange an individual annual review.

The meeting ended at 7.20pm. The date of the next FGB meeting is 3rd July, 2019.

#### Actions

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**AL** Clerk to Governors