



BOLDER ACADEMY
FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING MINUTES

Company Registered Number: 8932893

Chair: Victoria Eadie
Clerk: Rebecca Wilson (RW)
Date of meeting: 26th March 2024 at 8:00am
Venue: Bolder Academy

Attendance:

Name	Governor	Other	Present / Apologies / Absent
Rajiv Chandra (RC)	Appointed by Trust		Present
Silvia Del Corso (SDC)	Parent Governor		Present
David Brockie (DB)	Co-opted Governor		Present
Victoria Eadie (VE)	Appointed by Trust	Also a Member	Present
Helen Holton (HH)	Co-opted Governor		Apologies
Andrew McCaffer (AM)	Appointed by Trust		Present
Wendy Smith (WS)	Appointed by Trust		Apologies
Heidi Swidenbank (HS)	Ex-officio	Headteacher	Present
Carin Thakrar (CT)	Parent Governor		Present
Kate Biant (KB)		School Business Manager	Apologies
Greg George (GG)		Finance Director	Present
Liz Green (LG)		Deputy Head	Present
Chris Booth (CB)		Assistant Head	Present

The meeting was declared quorate.

Agenda item	Action
<p>1. Apologies for absence</p> <p>VE welcomed SDC and DB to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted for WS and HH. KB also sent apologies.</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 (30 Jan 24)</p> <p>The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.</p>	
<p>4. Matters arising/actions</p> <p>The following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safeguarding training. If they have not already done so, <u>Governors were asked to complete safeguarding training at the earliest opportunity.</u> - Model Articles of Association. VE confirmed that the updated Articles were with the school lawyers. - H&S visit. AM confirmed that he had completed a H&S walk. He also visited the Sixth Form whilst he was in school and appreciated the chance to meet with the students. 	Govs
<p>5. Membership</p> <p>RW confirmed that the Board unanimously agreed the appointment of DB and HH as Co-opted Governors with immediate effect for a four-year term of office.</p>	
<p>6. Update to Model Articles of Association</p> <p><u>RW confirmed that she will circulate meeting dates and invites for 2024-25.</u></p>	RW
<p>7.1 Headteacher's Report: Safeguarding update</p> <p>Liz Green (LG) explained that she was the lead for safeguarding and behaviour. She is the DSL, noting that the school has a wider team of Deputy DSLs. The self-reflective safeguarding audit has been circulated and a summary document shared. Sue Challen is the external safeguarding support provider and has just completed another audit. This audit compares to the previous audit completed in February 2022 and LG outline the feedback in more detail. IT filtering and monitoring was an area of focus, conscious of recent changes to KCSiE. <u>Safeguarding training must be completed by the first FGB, when changes to KCSiE will be covered. Safeguarding training also needs to be recorded on the SCR.</u> A Governor asked for more feedback regarding filtering and monitoring and LG explained that Smoothwall is used to block certain sites. Staff can highlight additional sites and it is also possible to see what pupils access on their class laptops. LG explained that students who try to access sites will be flagged and gave examples. Governors discussed this in further detail, recognising the additional workload placed on staff.</p>	RW RW

Q: A Governor queried where Bolder sat regarding filtering and monitoring, compared to other schools.

A: LG confirmed that Bolder sat in the middle of where schools set the threshold.

Q: A Governor asked if students were aware of the filtering and monitoring.

A: LG confirmed that they were, noting that it is also a preventative measure, although personal devices are not monitored.

Q: A Governor asked if the system would flag if a personal device was linked to the school Wi-Fi.

A: LG confirmed that it would still flag.

VE asked that LG outline strategic considerations at the next meeting, which can be supported by case studies and actions plans to capture bigger picture issues.

Q: A Governor asked how parents are informed when a pupil is managing self-medication.

A: LG explained that medication should be left at Reception so the school can monitor.

Liz Green left the meeting

7.2 Headteacher's Report: Assessment and data

Chris Booth (CB) explained that he is responsible for data and assessment and will run through the February mock data. VE explained that the Board was not familiar with 4Matrix. CB shared two documents capturing headline figures and key performance indicators. He acknowledged the maths mock results and outline the impact of a challenging maths paper.

Q: A Governor queried why the paper had been so challenging.

A: CB explained that it is best to use the Edexcel paper, which is unseen, and pupils cannot access it online.

CB confirmed that the maths department has done a lot since the mocks and significant support is in place for the students. He acknowledged that the languages mock score was also low and confirmed that the value added was negative.

Q: A Governor asked if it was possible to triangulate the maths results with other schools that have used the same paper.

A: CB explained that different school have different approaches. He highlighted that students tend to access past papers online and HS confirmed that this was a problem with the mocks last year.

Q: A Governor asked for confirmation that the maths team are on top of this issue.

A: CB confirmed that the department was working to an action plan, and further outlined the changes that have been made.

He confirmed that the maths department is engaged with the current Year 10, and he also outlined the approach taken regarding the higher paper.

Q: A Governor asked how much mock results reflected actual outcomes.

A: CB confirmed that most students improved on their mock results. HS confirmed that mock results are not predictions and outlined the progress made following the mocks last year.

CB also outlined the KPI sheet in more detail, which captures gaps and details the Progress 8 score. There are 22 Pupil Premium children in Year 11, and with 4 non-attendees and 13 with poor social and emotional health, this has a negative impact on Progress 8.

Q: A Governor queried the difference between boys and girls.

A: HS explained that more boys are Pupil Premium, which impacts on data. She also emphasised that strong, structured teaching mitigates the general trend regarding boys.

Q: A Governor queried the difference in English and maths results by gender.

A: CB confirmed that girls progress was worse with maths, and boys progress was worse with English and is more pronounced. Governors discussed this point in more detail, and it was highlighted that boys reading and writing in Year 10 was currently being looked at.

RW
(Agenda)

The Board also considered the performance of higher attaining students, recognising that it can be difficult to scrutinise the data, which is affected by the performance of individual students. It was recognised that higher attainers are not performing as well as middle and low attainers, and the scope for teachers to scrutinise 4Matrix was outlined. CB also highlighted that Years 9 and 10 did not have SATs data, which impacted on Progress 8 and the resulting focus on threshold students. He also referred to the SEND K students, recognising the negative Progress 8 score.

Q: A Governor asked if students in this cohort were discounted.

A: HS confirmed that some students came from overseas.

Q: A Governor asked if the gaps could be analysed against national data.

A: CB confirmed that the school is aware of the context behind the gaps, noting that the boy/girl gap may be slightly larger. The Board discussed this in further detail.

Referring to key Stage 3 assessment, CB outlined how the data is structured and DB recognised that the SLT actively promote a dialogue with Heads of Departments off the back of data analysis. The Board discussed the importance of capturing effort, and CB explained that the Horsforth Quadrant was being considered for Year 10 to compare effort and progress. HS confirmed that the final predictions will be shared at the next FGB.

Chris Booth left the meeting

7.3 Headteacher's Report: General update

HS referred to her report and asked for questions. VE highlighted that feedback regarding behaviour was positive and acknowledged that this was in contrast to previous conversations. HS confirmed that systems were tighter and pastoral support was being targeted effectively. There has also been a deliberate effort to change the narrative and capture the positive. ECTs are also aware of the support provided by the system, recognising that a small cohort within Year 10 are challenging. HS confirmed that positive messages are reinforced at staff briefings. She acknowledged that the cohort within Year 10 are impacting on staff. The school continues to work with families, and some students have shown significant improvements. VE highlighted that the ECT dynamic was positive and acknowledged that the school has managed a lot. HS confirmed that meetings with ECTs are positive, and they are reflective and committed to practice; the support to ECTs was also confirmed. VE recognised that the school has managed a large number of new teachers, who are now settled in school and able to support good behaviour. HS confirmed that this was a very different group of ECT teachers, compared to previous cohorts.

Q: A Governor asked if HS had a sense regarding staff movement.

A: HS confirmed that the school will lose one ECT and expanded on possible staff movement.

VE confirmed that data had already been covered and highlighted that it was good to see a drop in permanent exclusions.

Q: A Governor asked if the internal exclusion room was working well.

A: HS confirmed that this was going well although some groups were more challenging, noting several challenging boys in Year 10. VE also highlighted that Governors needed to be aware of the SEND and Pupil Premium profile.

Q: A Governor queried the situation regarding EAL.

A: HS acknowledged that some families were managing very challenging living conditions as well as historical trauma. She also acknowledged the impact of in year admissions.

Q: A Governor queried the trend of in year transfers to local schools.

A: HS highlighted that several students had moved to Lampton, which had been their first choice. She also highlighted that Chiswick's reputation was strong, noting that the SLT review mobility (in and out) rigorously.

RW
(Agenda)

VE acknowledged that number of students being educated at home, and HS confirmed that Local Authority (LA) numbers had accelerated and risen significantly. She highlighted that she always asks to meet with parents if they are considering home education to try and dissuade them. She also highlighted that attendance was above national and Governors acknowledged that persistent absence was a national issue. HS confirmed that systems have been tightened to address attendance concerns. She also highlighted that a lot of work has gone into staff recruitment and retention, and thanked SDC for her support. HS outlined known staff movement, detailing leavers, joiners and changes in hours. She also confirmed current vacancies.

8. FAR Committee report

AM explained that the Committee supported the budget assumptions, which have been shared with the Board. The internal audit was also considered. Feedback from ASCL has informed the assumptions, and GG gave more detailed feedback regarding his approach to capturing student numbers. It is difficult to judge Sixth Form numbers, and the school will be funded for 80 students in the Sixth Form next year. Referring to expenditure, AM highlighted that the cost of staffing was key and accounts for 80% of income. The budget will capture a 2.5% pay rise for teachers and 2% for support staff. VE highlighted that a deficit budget was set last year and emphasised that this year the aspiration must be to set a balanced budget. HS acknowledged challenges regarding the labour market as well as the financial impact of establishing the Sixth Form. VE confirmed that it can be argued that reserves have been used to establish and grow the Sixth Form.

Q: A Governor queried the reason for the deficit.

A: HS confirmed that the Sixth Form has had the biggest impact and is disproportionately expensive, noting that Governors previously made the strategic decision to start the Sixth Form knowing that it would not be cost effective in its initial startup phase. She also highlighted that falling pupil numbers is a factor.

Q: A Governor queried pupil numbers for next year.

A: HS confirmed that they were good but highlighted the impact of mobility.

Q: A Governor queried how many students were required in the Sixth form for a balanced budget.

A: GG confirmed that the Sixth Form needs 180 students.

VE highlighted that the loss of BTECs needs to be captured as a risk against Sixth Form, with schools only focusing on A Levels. If students are required to complete three A Levels, this will impact on student numbers. HS also highlighted the impact of out of area grammar schools. The Board discussed pupil numbers more broadly, and VE confirmed that the Board supported the proposed budget assumptions.

9. MAT thinking

VE confirmed that the Board has previously considered joining a MAT and outlined general thoughts to date. She emphasised that this needed to remain a consideration, recognising the risk that the school is managing, noting that a MAT would be able to support and mitigate some of these risks. She recommended that the Board look at local engagement and confirmed the intent to join a MAT rather than lead on this process. The need to consider conflicts of interest was noted, and who to approach was also considered. The Board considered this piece in more detail and discussed local opportunities. VE confirmed that a plan is required for next year, and it is important to restart this conversation.

RW
(Agenda)

10. Chair's Report

VE confirmed that all points have been covered.

11. Governor training and visits

VE thanked those Governors who have visited the school, and appreciated the proactive approach taken. VE also highlighted that Fran Gibney is confident that the Green Zone is established and is planning on visiting next term. Referring to staff voice, HS confirmed that feedback from exit interviews will be shared; this point was discussed in further detail.

10. Finance paperwork

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

11. Policies

Governors ratified the following policy:

- Appraisal Policy. HS confirmed that she will update the scope of the policy which is detailed on the front page.

HS

12. AOB

VE confirmed that she and HS will further consider the focus of the development session on 4 Jun 24.

VE

Next meeting date

- Tue 14 May 2024 via Zoom

Meeting ended at 10:10 am.

Signature:

**Name of
Chair:**

Date:
