



**Minutes of Student & Staff Well-Being
Monday 16th November 2015 – 6.30pm**

PRESENT

NAME	POSITION	PRESENT	APOLOGIES	ABSENT
Mrs A Martin (AMA)	Head Teacher	✓		
Mr R Tuck (RTU)	Staff Governor	✓		
Mrs H Baker (HBA)	Chair & Parent Governor	✓		
Mr I Phillips (IPH)	Parent Governor	✓		
Mrs C Ward (CWD)	Parent Governor	✓		
Mrs J Hart (JHA)	Community Governor		✓	
Mr M Betteridge (MBE)	Old Trust Governor		✓	
Revd. G Pond (GPO)	Church Appt Governor	✓		
Mr S Garrity (SGA)	Associate Headteacher	✓		
Mrs L Key (LKE)	Business Manager	✓		
Mrs B Humphrey-Lewis (BHL)	Assistant Headteacher	✓		
Miss S Bhogal (SBH)	Clerk	✓		

Agenda Item No:	1
Agenda Item:	Apologies
Minute Number:	SSWB1.15

Mrs J Hart & Mr M Betteridge had sent their apologies.

Agenda Item No:	2
Agenda Item:	Declaration of Interest
Minute Number:	SSWB2.15

None

Agenda Item No:	3
Agenda Item:	Terms of Reference
Minute Number:	SSWB3.15

The Chair asked for the terms of reference to be amended in order to clarify the quorum requirements. The Headteacher explained that where it states 3 members of the committee, then that excludes staff invited to attend and 3 members equate to 3 Governors.

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Ashbourne Academy
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Agenda Item No:	4
Agenda Item:	Minutes from the last meeting dated 11.05.15
Minute Number:	SSWB4.15

Subject to a few minor changes the minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

ACTION:	The Chair to sign the minutes.
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Agenda Item No:	5
Agenda Item:	Actions from the last meeting
Minute Number:	SSWB5.15

All outstanding actions have been completed.

The Chair asked the Clerk to keep reminding Governors of any upcoming key events.

The Chair also thanks BHL for delivering a very good useful safeguarding session to all Governors.

The Headteacher asked the Clerk whether all Governors had completed the Channel training.

ACTION:	Clerk to send a reminder to Governors who had completed this yet.
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Agenda Item No:	6
Agenda Item:	Local & National Updates
Minute Number:	SSWB6.15

The staff newsletter outlining the National updates has been sent to Governors. The Headteacher has been on a course and the headline updates are included in the staff newsletter.

Nationally there has been a press release detailing Teacher shortages, (this has also been emailed to the committee ahead of the meeting) this area will get worse before it gets better, we are currently looking at ways to attract more Teachers to QEGS. Our levels of pay are not comparable to the private sector, which does not help in recruiting and retaining Teachers. (Refer to newsletter)

We have tried to look at different things we can offer, for example taster days. Specialist subject shortages are becoming acute, more notably in Science, Business Studies and English, these are the hardest hit. We have looked at this and the changes we have made include increasing the class sizes rather than getting supply teachers. Speaking to staff the consensus has been that this is a smart move and they are happy that we have thought of something different. We are doing our best we can in a very difficult climate.

The Associate Head explained that feedback from parents via coffee mornings have been very positive.

Governors asked how you would possibly recruit Teachers from abroad. This can be done via agencies and you would also need to go through that Country's Embassy so it can be quite a challenge.

The Associate Headteacher explained that Wolfert School in Rotterdam are visiting QEGS this week, their standard of English is exceptional in terms of technical subject knowledge. If we did have Teacher shortages we could access the World Teaching Association. They have stated that they struggle to get English placements, so this could be another option.

We are currently thinking of running advertising campaigns, as we do need to address the impact Teacher shortages will have in the future, it is also important we get the work life balance right.

Governors asked whether we need to consider the attractions to living and working in Derbyshire, as this can be expensive, and if this is one possible reason why we are finding it difficult to recruit and retain. The Associate Head explained that there is no one reason why people decide to go into Teaching. It is a completely different job to what it used to be. The added difficulty of being in Derbyshire is that there is a lot of academisation, and we cannot offer high salaries. We need to have a multi-faceted approach. We also have many small schools that will become unviable.

The Headteacher has been in conversations with Teaching Assistants today, the government are keen to carry on the 'things that Michael Gove has started'.

We have appointed a new SENCO, Debbie Meadows, she is looking at a different role for the Teaching Assistants as that role has evolved, we are considering changing their title to Learning Tutors, and we have left this with them for them to come up with some ideas. The meeting was very positive.

We are continuing to keep on top of the housing situation. We are due to meet with Mr L Rose shortly and Mr T Millward has written to Derbyshire County Council stating that section 106 needs to be available to QEGS as soon as possible.

Governors asked whether these two people mentioned above have influence than us. Yes they can ask the awkward questions.

The Business Manager explained that this will be a challenge as we are under capacity and they may say that we are required to absorb these extra students, with no extra funding.

Agenda Item No:	7
Agenda Item:	Staff absence and cover arrangements
Minute Number:	SSWB7.15

The Business Manager explained that this area is still work in progress. As the school day is split into six periods, collating information can be a challenge.

The staff attendance target still remains at 95%. The table in the papers shows the summary of staff absence for the period 13.04.15 to 23.10.15.

We are monitoring all absences and multiple short term absences will be triggered to the Leadership Team. Informal meetings are set up in the first instance and we will set a review period. Generally by the time you get to the review period the attendance has improved.

We have not identified any patterns of absence, and we are clear that the meetings are not about challenging the illness but more to offer support and minimise absences.

Governors asked if the pay policy varies between support staff and Teachers. Yes there are aspects of the policy that vary between the two sectors of staff. Sick pay is at least 6 months full pay for teachers, or more depending on their length of service

Governors stated that this seems very generous. This is a national policy, however, we can double check this. If staff are off long term then after the first month we do ask for a meeting and then we ask for two subsequent meetings in the next two months. The judgement in terms of dismissal is our decision.

Governors asked whether we provide occupational health referrals. Yes we do, if the absence is stress related for example then we always refer to occupational health, we use a company called RPS who are completely independent of the school, they have clinics across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. We also offer phased returns to work and try to bring these issues to a close.

Governors stated that each absence needs to be taken into consideration on its own merit. If anyone is off sick, we do keep in touch with them. That way we are proactive.

Governors asked why the figures between teachers and assistants is so large. The Associate Head explained that a teacher being absent has a big impact on students. Some staff who have infrequent time off can still be disruptive. As an employer we have to ask ourselves why this is happening, is it because of burnout, stress or is there something we can do to help.

Line Managers also need educating in terms of the return to work forms as HR are unable to conduct all the return to work interviews. If a member of staff is off ill, the return to work form should be completed within 48 hours of the member of staff returning to work. Line Managers need to have the information about the amount of sickness taken and have the confidence to approach and talk to the staff member they line manage.

We are also hitting double figures when it comes to time off during pregnancies, we need to add this maternity absence to the data and how we cover this. We would never use a teacher that is not qualified in that subject area. We do have a small bank of relief staff that are former QEGS staff that are happy to cover lessons.

Governors asked what the difference was between supply staff and cover supervisors. A supply teacher is an external person who is qualified to teach that subject speciality. A cover supervisor is an internal member of staff, who are mainly used to support short term absences, they deliver the work set by the teacher who is absent.

Governors asked whether we recruit staff to cover maternity leave. Yes we advertise with a fixed term contract.

The Associate Headteacher explained that in very short notice and short term absences it is very unusual if the subject team cannot provide cover for its own department. Science has been affected greatly, however the curriculum plan has been changed taking this into consideration.

Governors asked if any other subject areas were affected. Yes possibly English, however this is not as acute as Science.

The Chair asked that we tighten up our return to work interviews and that Line Managers should use their discretion. The Business Manager explained that some line managers are proactive, however this is an area which required training.

Governors also suggested a reward scheme for staff that are not absent, perhaps a 1k reward over the year for staff that have achieved 95% attendance. In the long run money would be saved on supply teachers and it is a good incentive.

Agenda Item No:	8
Agenda Item:	Recruitment & Retention
Minute Number:	SSWB8.15

Governors asked if the staff highlighted in green on page 17 were trainees. The staff that are highlighted in green are with us through the AOR (Assessment Only Route). This is one way into teaching. You are required to work for one year as an unqualified teacher. Evidence needs to be submitted and the tutor will carry out the assessments, they then proceed to the NQT year. You are required to have a degree in that subject to be unqualified and be in a classroom. Schools direct is another route in.

Agenda Item No:	9
Agenda Item:	Reports & Safeguarding
Minute Number:	SSWB9.15

Over the last academic year we have only had 13 exclusions, which compared to other schools is very low. We are making increased use of internal isolation. This and fixed exclusions can only be authorised by the Head and Associate Head.

Governors asked what happens to students that are excluded in terms of education. For a five day exclusion the school will provide work that they either take home or we post/email this to them. If six days pass then another school will become the education provider, and for permanent exclusions the pathway team will pick this up and offer alternative solutions.

Governors asked if any fines are applied for parents taking students out during term time. Yes, it seems that paying the fine is not a deterrent, as it is cheaper to pay the fine than go on holiday

during the school holidays. **Governors asked whether the school meets with parents during this process.** Yes.

BHL also shared that she had qualified as a Specialist Leader in Safeguarding. The Assistant Headteacher explained that on the last INSET day (23rd October) Prevent training was delivered to all Teaching staff and TAs by Dr Phil Henry.

He left a very useful PowerPoint presentation which we can use, we can include this in our safeguarding training that we provide externally.

We needed more staff to be trained to level 3 safeguarding, therefore Kim Brown and Dan Hallsworth have now been trained in their roles as Progress Leaders. This has strengthened our position.

The Headteacher thanked BHL for all her help with above.

Agenda Item No:	10
Agenda Item:	Parental Engagement feedback
Minute Number:	SSWB10.15

Open Evening & Post 16 Open Evening.

We have had a very successful open evening and post 16 open evening, both were very well attended. We should have indications about the numbers for year 7 and year 12 soon.

Coffee Mornings

The Associate Head and Assistant Head (BHL) came up with this idea before the summer. We have used this as a platform for parents to informally chat about concerns and issues that they may have. We have had very positive feedback from parents and they are already asking what the subsequent coffee mornings will entail. We are considering literacy and numeracy for the next one and year 9 options after that.

We are keeping a track on attendance and will be asking parents to fill in a feedback form in the upcoming coffee mornings. These mornings are very useful to help parents to prevent small problems building up.

Governors asked if these would always take place on a Friday morning. Feedback from parents that attended said that Friday was a better day, however we can try a different day of the week in the spring term and see how that goes.

Countdown to Success

The Countdown to Success event was previously named the Supported Learning Evening, AHA came up with the new name to make it sound like an event that was tailored to everyone. A team of staff planned the evening. The event was very well attended and parents and students had said that this was more engaging and interesting than parent's evenings. The feedback collated from the evening was available to Governors. Everyone liked the market place approach. They requested that next time perhaps the revision sessions could be longer, all year 11 have had that session now, even if they had not attended on the evening.

19.11.2015 – V1

Signed by Chair of S&S Committee: _____

Printed Name: Helen Baker

We have also presented at George Spencer School in Nottingham. They were delivering a conference on boys, the Vice-Principal had asked if we could offer anything, so Katie Brown & Nicole Stocker presented on behalf of QEGS to the delegates at the conference. The PowerPoint they used was given out to Governors.

The Chair also stated that she attended the event as a parent and really enjoyed it.

Communications to parents

The Associate Headteacher explained to Governors that in order to justify making changes in Teaching and Learning, we have to consider the high costs attached to sending letters home. We are currently working on a communication strategy, so that all letters and any other communications are dealt with by sending an email or a text message. Hard copies will also be available should any parents still wish to receive them this way. We are also considering an electronic reply slip.

Agenda Item No:	11
Agenda Item:	School Timings Survey Results
Minute Number:	SSWB11.15

This survey links to the student experience in school. Staff have shared their thoughts as to what they think of the timings of the school day.

The results are included in the pack sent to Governors.

One of the ideas raised was an early start to the day, which would result in an early finish. Other schools in Derbyshire finish between 3pm and 3.45pm. We also have 5 minute changeover and an hour for lunch. This all equated to a very long day. A lot of our students also travel long distances to get here.

One solution could be to offer a Friday early finish, which would follow our PCE day timings. That way you do not lose any teaching and learning time, finishing early would also help with recruitment and retention.

Governors asked if we were restricted by the transport companies when it comes to early finishes. We would need to sit and talk to the transport providers to see what can be put in place.

ACTION:	Associate Head to investigate early close on Friday as soon as possible.
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The Associate Headteacher also explained that nearly everyone that had filled in the survey had said they would not change having four lessons before lunch. Learning is more effective for example isolation the call out is very low.

BHL commented that this would boost staff morale as other schools have done this, and it seems to work well.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.40pm

19.11.2015 – V1

Signed by Chair of S&S Committee: _____

Printed Name: Helen Baker