

# QUEEN ELIZABETH GIRLS SCHOOL

## GOVERNING BOARD

### Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 3 July 2018

Parent Trustees	Trustees	Staff Trustees
Rebecca Hanley (RH) (Chair)	Uzo Nwamu (UN) (up to 8.3)	Violet Walker (VW) Headteacher
Alan Jenner (AJ) (up to 8.3)	Hannah Ross (HR)	
Rebecca Peer (RP)		
Susan Cottam (SC) ( up to 8.3)		

**In attendance:** Royden Gothelf (Member) (to Minute 3.2)  
Bernadette Wallis (Acting Clerk).

#### Students' Feedback and Presentation

The Chair welcomed the QEGS students who had been invited to the meeting. Two Year 9 students (Trixie and Brigitte) were representing the Student Council and the Head Girl and two Deputy Head Girls had been invited to give feedback on their experience at QEGS. The Chair introduced herself and explained that the Governing Board is in place to set the School's Vision and Strategy, to monitor performance and get value for money. The Chair added that it is important that the Board had the opportunity to learn what it was like to be a student at the School, what was good and what could be improved.

*The Chair asked the Head Girl why she wanted the role:* In response the Head Girl said she wanted to be a positive role model, someone who could lead and communicate across the school.

*The Chair asked how vertical integration (communication across QEGS) could be improved:* By children in different years working together. The Head Girl said she would like there to be more interaction between the years, with older girls working with those in lower years. The Deputy Head Girls agreed with this and added that older students could connect with younger students through activities they loved such as sport or other activities.

*HR asked what the students would like to see done differently in QEGS:* More preparation earlier on in terms of the options available, i.e. Oxbridge, STEM related work. Ensuring that no student felt she had any limits in terms of what she could achieve.

*UN asked as a follow up to this, how the students felt the School could demonstrate the opportunities available:* In response, the students said organising talks from students who have already achieved, especially those from different backgrounds, was helpful and would give younger students more confidence and a greater understanding of the opportunities available to them. The Head teacher mentioned events that currently take place for example the Careers Fair for years 9 and above, The Girls Network for Year 9 and Educating Women of the Future Programme for sixth form students. It was agreed that it may be useful for younger students to be involved in these activities.

*RP asked about sport provision in QEGS.* There are a lot of sporting activities in the school and QEGS gets involved in Barnet Champs. The students said that the sixth form did not get so much opportunity to be involved in sports and that it would be



good if the QEGS grounds could be utilised more. The students agreed that exercise and outdoor activity was really good for students' mental health and positive wellbeing.

*AJ asked about the mental health day that had been held recently:* The students said this had been really useful with different skills and classes including a self defence class and a posture lesson which covered how to cope with pressure and go about daily life with good mental health. Reference was made to the TED talk by Amy Cuddy 'Your Body Language May Shape who you are' which may be useful for students to watch.

*AJ asked the students why they chose to stay at QEGS for the sixth form.*

There were a mixture of responses, for example, the curriculum offer (fashion and textiles), the school atmosphere and the opportunity to study STEM subjects - there were no barriers for young women to study these in the School. The Head Girl said that she felt at ease in the school and that she would be supported.

The Governors commended the students on their composure and thanked them for their feedback.

*Presentation:* Brigitte and Trixie, two Year 9 students, gave a presentation about the School Council. The School Council was there to generate ideas about how QEGS could be improved and to give all students a voice. The students summarised activity that had been organised by the School Council including an International Culture Day on 17 July and a visit to Parliament. The International Culture Day would be a good opportunity for all students to express their own culture. Council also engaged with staff and put forward ideas as to how things could be improved, for example, in the school canteen and in terms of environmental responsibility. The students said that in future, the Council would like to see more activity across the school years that gave the school the feel of being more of a community.

The Chair thanked the students for the presentation which had been delivered eloquently and thanked all the students for coming to present at the meeting.

## **1. Welcome, Apologies for Absence, Declarations of Interest**

Apologies for absence had been received from Carrie Scott and Penelope Martin Smith.

1.1 There were no declarations of absence.

## **2. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2018**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2018 were agreed as an accurate record of the proceedings and signed by the Chair as such.

2.1 Governors expressed concern that the papers for meetings were arriving late, in different batches, and allowing little time for them to be read before the meeting. The governors recognised the fact that the School did not currently have a Clerk in place. The Board agreed that this was an area for improvement once the new Clerk had been appointed.

2.2 The Chair said that legally papers should be sent at least a week in advance of the meetings. The governors also requested hard copies of papers.

**Action: To be noted for appointment of new Clerk.**

2.3 Matters arising from the minutes of the Governing Board Meeting held on 24 April 2018: The following action points were noted.



8.1 Update Staff Survey: The first meeting of the workplace team had been held and was positive. It was planned that the workplace team would meet once every half term. The Head teacher said that there is some work to be done with middle managers to ensure that they fully understood their roles as part of the leadership team. An update to be provided to the Governing Body following the next staff survey. **Action: Clerk to note.**

8.2 Parent Survey Response: There was just one anomaly which was related to an incident in the School.

8.2 Student Council Members to be invited to present to Governors at Board Meeting on 3 July 2018: The student Council Members had presented at the start of the meeting.

11.1 Budget implications for the pay increase for non teaching staff: The Board had asked for more information about the financial implications of the pay increase. The Head teacher said that this would equate to approximately £1545 per month in total for all support staff; so the cost for April 2018-July 2018 would be about £6,200.

**The Governing Board AGREED the pay increase for non teaching staff.**

12.1 Review of Policies: The Board had asked for some policies to be sent to them. Actioned.

14.1 Trustee Link visits: An update on 6<sup>th</sup> form outcomes and destinations and comparisons with previous years had been forwarded to Carrie Scott, Chair of the Finance & Premises Committee.

15.1 Public Sector Equalities Duty: It was confirmed that the Public Sector Equality Duty statement had been added to the school website.

### 3. SWOT/Vision and Ethos

3.1 The Chair had circulated guidance issued by the National Governance Association (NGA) entitled 'Being Strategic - A guide for Governing Bodies' as well as a blank SWOT analysis template for completion and discussion at the meeting.

3.2 Royden Gothelf, Member, updated the Governors on his visit to a briefing held by Ark Pioneer Academy who were opening a new school in Barnet in the autumn.

The new school was a new build with a high level of technology and at the briefing Ark had emphasised that the school's ethos would be high aspirations and expectations. The new school was proposing long days with a lot of enrichment activity.

The Chair thanked Mr Gothelf for the update. *Royden Gothelf left the meeting.*

3.3 The governors discussed QEGS strengths. The School had a proven success record and that all students, including those from a disadvantaged background, were given the opportunity to achieve whilst at the School. 'Progress 8' was a key strength.



- 3.4 However, the governors noted the need for there to be clear and consistent messaging across the school in terms of its mission and vision. The QEGS Mission and Vision statement was quite long, this consistency was not always possible. The governors discussed whether or not it would be useful to look at the current mission and vision statements with a view to coming up with a shorter, more punchy statement about what QEGS stood for.
- 3.5 The governors concurred that the meaning and ethos set out in the vision was the right one for QEGS and should not be changed but it was agreed that there may be value in a small working group being set up to look at the wording and, in particular, if they could come up with a shorter 'strap line' about the School. **A working group consisting of RP, HR and the Headteacher was established.**
- 3.6 Notwithstanding this, the governors noted that QEGS was successful because of its sustainable achievement. It was important that the School continued to focus on maintaining this.

#### **4. Head teacher's Report**

- 4.1 **Review of School Development Plan and discussion of new SDP targets:** The School Development Plan 2018/19 including targets had been circulated to governors. The Head teacher highlighted key issues.
- 4.2 Key Stage 4: Whilst outcomes for 2018 were not known yet, the Head teacher said that she felt that QEGS was on track. The Chair noted that the targets for 2019 were good ones, they were high and aspirational. The Head teacher drew attention to 2019 GCSE targets which were set out by student group, for some students with specific educational needs the judgement would be more about attainment and not achievement. The governors noted Progress 8 (average scores) which were: 0.67 for all students, 0.59 for disadvantaged and 0.7 for non disadvantaged. The fact that these were fairly level reflected the school's inclusivity. Progress 8 for Black African students was 0.65 which was positive.
- 4.3 The governors were interested to know how the figures compared with other schools in Barnet. The Head teacher said that a key difference was the fact that QEGS did not notice differences in background and saw themselves as equal which was a valuable life skill and good for society.
- 4.4 Performance/targets table for sixth formers. The target for 2018 was 93% for students to achieve 3 'A' levels grades A\*-E, this rose to 97% for 2019.
- 4.5 **Monitoring of Reporting to parents and changes, if applicable:** The Head teacher said that there were no changes.
- 4.6 **Planned trips and visits for 2018-19:** The Head teacher summarised the trips that had been planned so far including a trip to Budapest, a trip to Wessex for English and a trip to Salisbury as well as some geography field trips. The Board would receive a report at the next Governing Board meeting. **Action: Clerk to note for agenda.**
- 4.7 **Initial indications of Sixth Form Numbers:** Early indications were positive and the Head teacher said that the School was looking to convert 120 students into year 12. There had been a packed hall on induction day but the full outcome would not be known until results and enrolment day. The governors were

RH



pleased to note that the students were enjoying the fact that the Sixth Form was now part of the School.

## 5. Report on Chair's action

5.1 The Chair reported that the only action she had taken since the last meeting had been agreeing some small Companies House charges to update records.

**5.2 Budget Forecast:** The governors noted that academies needed to submit budget forecast returns to ESFA. **The Governing Board APPROVED the budget forecast as agreed by the Finance and Premises Committee at its meeting on 27 July 2018.**

## 6. Staffing Matters

6.1 The Headteacher summarised staffing changes in the School:

Resignations:	Head of Year
	Assistant Head Teacher
New appointments:	Part time photography teacher
	Part time economics
	New second in deputy modern foreign language

6.2 The governors noted a new subject area in Government and Politics at A Level and also the broadening of the curriculum at that level in terms of photography, economics and politics and BTEC Health and Social Care. A new SENCO was in place.

6.3 The Governing Board was reassured to note that staff turnover was low, although it recognised that some staff turnover was healthy. The Head teacher said that over a two week period teachers were contracted to teach for 41 out of 50 hours so they had 9 hours for other in school work which compared well with other local schools. It was agreed that data on staff turnover would be submitted to the autumn meeting of the Board. **Action: Clerk to note for the agenda.**

## 7. Trustee Visit report - SEND

7.1 SC had visited this area on 20 June 2018 and a report of the visit had been circulated to governors.

7.2 The report highlighted the fact that SEND DD2 data analysis reflected that SEND students are making less progress than non-SEND students in Maths and Science in Key Stage 3. They make equivalent, and in some cases, better progress than non-SEND students in English. The success of Accelerated Reader was thought to be contribution to better progress in English.

7.3 QEGS was continuing to seek effective online maths resources to support SEND students. Tracie Parker, SEND SLT, had discussed her plans to review SEND provision/interventions in maths using her own background as a mathematician. SC said that she had discussed the use of science based LSAs and science graduates to support science provision for SEND students with Ms Parker.

7.4 The governors noted that a new SENCO had been appointed who was enthusiastic and, it was envisaged, would champion the SEND agenda through

the school. SC said that she felt that by being a championing role rather than a functioning one the SENCO would be more effective.

- 7.5 In respect of the action from the visit which related to feedback from parents of SEND students, the governors discussed whether or not a survey of parents of SEND students would be useful and it was agreed that it would be.

**Action: Head teacher to pick up.**

## 8. Safeguarding

8.1 It was noted that the school now needed a designated lead for mental health, this was part of new regulations. In QEGS this was Tracie Parker. QEGS was currently looking at how it could support young carers.

8.2 The safeguarding guidelines 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' had been updated. The updates were on the QEGS website.

8.3 The Head teacher said that she had commissioned a safeguarding audit.

*Ms Cottam, Mr Jenner and Ms Nwamu left the meeting. The Chair confirmed that with three governors, the meeting was quorate.*

## 9. **Feedback from surveys**

9.1 The Headteacher circulated a Data Sheet showing feedback from the student surveys that had been carried out together with a commentary. The results for Years 7, 8 and 9 had been included, the results for Year 10 were to be collated. The School planned to do another survey at a deeper level to analyse some of the specifics of the feedback. The Governing Board discussed, particularly the questions which had generated less positive feedback.

9.2 Question 6: 'I am proud to be a QE Girl': The Commentary set out the fact that some girls (particularly at Year 7) had expressed concern about external perceptions of all girls' schools (i.e. that students within them were lesbians). The governors felt that this might highlight the need for more equality and diversity training with this year group.

9.3 The governors noted that the conditions in class for completing the survey were varied, with some teachers applying more discipline than others.

9.4 A particular concern were the responses to the questions about the Prevent Agenda and FGM which suggested that students did not know what the Prevent Agenda or FGM was, thus highlighting safeguarding issues. The Head teacher confirmed that all students had had Prevent and FGM presentations despite the low survey results. The governors felt that the poor response to the questions and seeming lack of understanding about what the Prevent agenda was, or what FGM was, may indicate how the question was set and a lack of understanding about terminology rather than the subject.

9.5 Notwithstanding this, it was important that students could answer these questions and the Head teacher had taken immediate action to arrange further facilitation sessions for QEGS students.





9.6 Overall, there had been positive feedback from students. The Head teacher explained that there had been some behavioural issues that the school had had to address and this may have resulted students' perceiving that they were being picked on or targeted by staff. It was important that staff knew to explain the rationale when they were speaking to students about their behaviour.

9.10 In response to a question, the Head teacher said that work was being undertaken with Year 9 students, in particular, to tackle behaviour issues.

9.11 The Head teacher added that the questions in the second survey would be phrased in a different way so as to gain a greater understanding. It was noted that the survey results had only just been published, they had been shared with SLT on Monday, 2 July.

9.12 An update would be provided to the Governing Board in December 2018.

**Action: Clerk to note for agenda.**

## **10. Review of Policies**

10.1 The Board received a set of policies with the agenda for the meeting as well as a guidance note from the DfE setting out which policies a school should have and at which level they needed to be agreed. The guidance note was very helpful and would be used by the school to ensure that only those policies needing approval by the Governing Board would be submitted to the Board.

10.2 The Chair suggested that RP and HR work with the Headteacher to go through QEGS existing policies, identify any gaps, make any necessary amendments and bring back to the Board only those policies requiring Board approval.

**Action: RP, HR, VW.**

10.3 A brief summary update paper would be drafted for the autumn meeting of the Governing Board.

**10.4 The Board approved the Careers Education and Charging and Remission policies.**

## **11. Membership and Appointments**

11.1 The Governing Board noted the appointment of Carrie Scott as Chair of the Finance & Premises Committee.

11.2 The Board noted the resignation of the Hilary Furey, Clerk and Company Secretary. An Acting Company Secretary had been in place for the Finance & Resources meeting on 27 June 2018, and the Governing Board meeting currently taking place. The appointment process for a permanent Clerk and Company Secretary was underway and it was anticipated that an appointment would be made for the start of the new term.

**11.3 The Terms of Reference for Committees, as circulated, were AGREED.**

11.4 There had been no changes in Link Governor roles. HR volunteered to be Humanities Link Governor. The Board supported the appointment of HR as Humanities Link Governor. The Chair would brief HR further on the nature of the link governor role.

11.5 The governors agreed that there was the need to appoint a further governor with finance experience, possibly someone with experience of secondary schools and academy finances, the new appointee to be a member of the Finance and Premises Committee. **Action: Chair to follow up with the Head teacher and new Clerk when appointed.**

11.6 The Chair said that it was important that the Board had succession plans in place and that a new Vice Chair should be appointed. This was something that could be picked up when the new Clerk was appointed. **Action: RP, VW and Clerk to consider succession planning, to pick up at autumn Governing Board meeting.**

11.7 The Governing Board AGREED the Scheme of Delegation for 2018/19.

11.8 **Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2018/19:** To be deferred to September meeting. **Action: Clerk to note for the agenda.**

## **12. Meetings Schedule and Calendar**

12.1 RH said that she would put together a Governors' Handbook including a meetings schedule and calendar for the beginning of the new academic year.

## **13. Any Other Business**

13.1 'A' Level and GCSE Results: A Level results were due to go to students on Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> August and GCSE Results on Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Head teacher would notify governors of performance by email.

*The meeting closed at 20.38*

*RH.*



### Summary of Action Points

Action	Owner
2.2 Papers for meetings to be sent to Governors and Committees a week in advance of meetings.	Clerk with colleagues at QEGS
2.3 (8.1) Update on Staff Survey to go to FGB.	Clerk to note for agenda planning.
4.6 List of Planned trips and visits for 2018/19 to be provided for next FGB Meeting.	Clerk to note for agenda planning.
6.3 Data on staff turnover (percentages) to go to autumn meeting of the Governing Body.	Clerk to note for agenda planning.
7.5 Survey of SEND parents - Head teacher to pick up.	Head teacher.
9.12 Feedback from surveys. Update to be provided for autumn FGB.	Clerk to note for agenda planning.
10.2 Go through existing policies and see which ones need updating	RP and HR work with VW.
11.6 Succession Planning. RP, VW and Clerk to pick up. To be item on agenda for autumn meeting.	RP, VW, Clerk
11.8 Election of Chair and Vice Chair - to be deferred to autumn meeting.	Clerk to note for agenda planning.

*R Hanley 14 May 19*

