



MINUTES
FOR THE MEETING OF THE
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
OF BRYMORE ACADEMY
HELD ON
TUESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2021
AT 5.30pm via teams

Actions from Brymore LGB Meeting held on 30 November 2021

Item Reference	Action	Person Responsible	Due Raised
1.4	Chair to give an update on recruitment of new Governors at next meeting	JG	05/10/21
1.6	The Chair to arrange a visit with PLE when possible.	JG	05/10/21
1.7	The Chair to arrange for feedback obtained from the LGB on the Governance Review and training requirements be forwarded to FD before the next meeting.	JG	05/10/21
2.0	MT to arrange for Governors to visit the school, farm and oversee lessons.	MT	05/10/21
5.0	AL to forward reports to FD for sending onto the LGB	AL/FD	30/11/2021



Signed.....



MINUTES
FROM THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
OF BRYMORE ACADEMY
HELD ON
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Members

- | | | | |
|---|------------------|------|---------------|
| ✓ | Ann Dyer | (AD) | |
| ✓ | Richard Graydon | (RG) | |
| - | Jason Gunningham | (JG) | (Chair) |
| ✓ | Mark Thomas | (MT) | (Headteacher) |
| ✓ | Eve Watt | (EW) | |
| ✓ | Stuart Bacon | (SB) | |
| ✓ | April Lee | (AL) | |

In Attendance

- | | | | |
|---|------------------|------|---------|
| ✓ | Fran Davis | (FD) | (Clerk) |
| ✓ | Charlotte Wade | (CW) | |
| ✓ | Mike Cullen | (MC) | |
| ✓ | Russell Matthews | (RM) | |
- ✓ those present

1. Procedural matters

1.1 Apologies for absence and acceptance/non-acceptance

JG was unable to attend due to illness. AD therefore chaired the meeting.

CW, MC and RM were attending as observers and the Chair welcomed them to the meeting. Introductions of the new Governors and LGB were undertaken.

1.2 Declarations of Interest – None

1.3 Code of Conduct



Signed.....

All Governors have read and agreed to abide by the Code of Conduct.

1.4 Minutes from last meeting held on 5 October 2021

Minutes were agreed as accurate

Actions outstanding

- Chair to give an update on recruitment of new Governors at next meeting – **Postponed** until the next meeting
- The Chair to arrange a visit with PLE when possible - **Postponed** until the next meeting.
- FD to forward Governance Review questions and training needs onto the Chair. The Chair to arrange for feedback to be obtained from the LGB on the Governance Review and training requirements and forwarded to FD before the November meeting - **Postponed** until the next meeting
- MT to look into an individual portage for homework – **Completed** - MT advised they were reviewing their website and as such no changes or decisions have been as yet. They will be remaining with the current arrangements.
- MT to share Peer Review report at next meeting - **Completed**.
- MT to arrange for Governors to visit the school, farm and oversee lessons – **Ongoing** MT advised that with current restrictions and staffing levels it was not possible to visit at the moment however visits would be arranged in the new year if restrictions allowed.

JG

JG

JG

MT

1.5 Update on recruitment of Governors to LGB

Postponed until next meeting

1.6 Update on Training and Governance Review

As above

2 **CEO Reporting Requirements**

2.1 Head teacher Report

MT gave highlights from the report:

- Predicted grades - P8 -0.04. The progress 8 data needs to be viewed with a degree of caution as there has been no national data base to compare with for two years. Subject data will be especially inaccurate. However, there are no specific concerns but year 11 pupils are struggling.

It was asked are you expecting the GCSE exam process to be normal this year.



No, the Government will let us know in February an indication of the topics to be covered in exams and to prepare portfolios if the exams do not go ahead.

A Governor felt being notified in February was quite late to allow for suitable planning

We already know what topics have been dropped but will receive some indication of any specific features not contained in subject areas this will help us narrow down the scope of revision.

The science data was queried as 43% in 2019 with P8 of +0.05 whereas 51% this year shows -0.66

There are anomalies as the subjects are being compared with the P8 national database which is not accurate. If we get 51% it won't be a P8 of -0.66

- Staffing changes – we have vacancies for farm staff and this is causing issues with milking cover over Christmas.
- Building works – Swimming pool work continues. We have purchased a marquee which will be a permanent structure. Trust schools will be able to hire it out.

It was asked as staffing is stretched would it be possible for local boys to come in and help out

Yes we have started that process but the challenge is no one can come onto site without a DBS check. We have two to process in time to work over the holiday.

The Boarding governor commented that it was good to see MT covering a boarding duty and know the boys appreciated it.

- Covid – student cases are low, but staffing is a challenge with between 5-10 away most days. It is fair to say this has been one of the most challenging times during my time in headship. Staff are very tired and there are concerns how sustainable this is.

It was asked how the staff who were feeling low from the recent questionnaire were coping.

MT advised virtually all staff from the boarding team have been interviewed and everyone is feeling more connected. Staff were pleased we did the survey and can see we are doing something about the feedback. However, generally all staff are feeling low.

It was asked whether there was any merit in closing the school early to ensure no one gets Covid prior to Christmas

MT was not keen and would not be able to make that decision without consultation with PLE, however there are only two weeks to go and boys have already missed so much.

A Governor felt that home is not always a safe place for some boys and feel the school should stay open.

A Governor asked how MT was coping



It is relentless and unfortunately some parents do not understand the situation and are expecting everything to run as normal. Other Head teachers are in a similar situation and the Trust have funded and put in place support mechanisms.

2.2 Peer Review

MT explained the process and background to the peer reviews.

We asked the review to focus on areas that we are less secure on and our question was *Is the curriculum fit for purpose for vulnerable &/or SEND students*. We also asked them to look at PSHCE and careers and how well they have progressed.

It was a positive day but there was nothing we were not expecting. We had some suggested actions to put in place but the key highlight was the incredible feedback given to the team from the boys.

It was asked if is easier to manage 40% of pupils with SEN or 12% which is the national average

No, it is not but because we have that number we have to adapt measures on a whole school basis which other schools would not have to do. However the numbers are a real issue as you have to balance getting these boys started off but not over simplifying work so there is no challenge.

Although Brymore cannot be selective can you aim to only take 30% of pupils with SEN

We have acquired a reputation for being able to help boys with SEN but the admissions procedure and policy are legal documents that cannot be altered. However there is a meeting arranged with the LA as we are not able to carry on taking these numbers as we are struggling to meet their needs.

A Governor mentioned they had been advised to place their son at Brymore because of their reputation.

It was asked what are the plans for improving links with higher education establishments such as Exeter University.

Some boys visited Nottingham University recently and are now considering pursuing a university route. We want to raise aspirations for HE.

It was mentioned that local university courses are available at BTC and would be pleased to work with the academy.

MT advised a couple of visits to BTC had been postponed but were now booked in for the new year.

2.3 ADP

Governors noted the document.

MT gave a progress update on this.

- Ensuring departments are fit for purpose and carrying out deep dives



- GGT – have met with staff and looked at their personal targets
- Trying to keep strategic stuff going has been a challenge but we are doing our best.

2.4 SEF – Governors noted the report

3 **Statutory reports**

Safeguarding & SEN

Covered in section below

Behaviour, Attendance and exclusions

- 56% reduction in exclusions so far this year. No permanent exclusions either.

MT explained the process now being adopted for first time exclusions and permanent exclusions.

It was asked if parents are more supportive and tackling the problems at home which could be impacting on numbers. MT advised our parents are extremely supportive and building that positive relationship up with them always helps.

A Governor noted that a huge amount of effort can go into a small improvement however this is a significant improvement and hoped Covid does not interrupt this. MT agreed and on paper we should be much worst but we've made great improvement. Governors asked for their thanks to passed onto LW and the team for a fantastic achievement.

- Attendance – covid is impacting on figures but we are doing everything we can but there is little back up from the LA on pursuing persistent absenteeism.
- Safeguarding – number of concerns have increased at times up to 23 per week. Covid has impacted on family relationships, and this is spilling over to outside areas and some incidents are quite serious.
- We are worried that being short staffed could impact on how quickly we can respond to concerns and Ofsted will scrutinise this.

It was asked whether concerns are generated from outside the school or within school and how often are they happening. The vast majority are outside of the school – family, crime but some are peer on peer abuse in school etc. The initial concerns can generate ongoing concerns as some home issues will not get resolved.



- SEN – number of students 173. The current year breakdown shows a significant increase from year 11 at 38 to year 7 at 63.
- We are spending more on SEN than we are receiving from the funding. We would not be able to do this without Trust help. We have a much higher staff to pupil ratio than other schools.
- Actions and objectives were outlined.
- Tighter link between SEN and behaviour.

It was asked when the year 11 pupils leave, and all students are on the new funding band, will it help or will the need outweigh the increase funding
 It will help but the reality is the Trust are paying for all the support as funding is centralised. The critical bit is if statements show a need for 1:1 support as we cannot deliver on this.

Would the other schools in the Trust be resentful of the funding and support Brymore receives.
 No, I don't think so, I won't be worried about other school's funding as long as I felt it was fair. The Trust directs funds where it is needed.

It was asked are you able to achieve P8 scores that you want for the pupils
 There have not been any P8 data since 2019. However P8 is the fairest method of measuring progress as it compares like for like. I am confident we will be able to deliver.

Governors felt that progress is all that matters and that was good to hear.

AL has visited the school twice – the first time was unplanned and just an opportunity to meet KH. It was good to hear that communication has improved now that SEND is on SLT.

Also did a learning walk and met 6 students and behaviour was exceptional.

Action AL to forward reports to FD for sending onto Governors.

AL/FD

4 Approval of Policy

4.1 Admissions 23/24

Only one amendment made on looked after children.

AL proposed and RG seconded acceptance of the policy

5 AOB

A parent has approached MT about their son changing from a boarder to an outboarder. However, as the circumstance are genuine



and he has been a boarder for 4 years we would like to propose we go one over PAN next year to accommodate him.

Governors felt it was absolutely the right thing to do. EW proposed and AL seconded the recommendation.

6 Date of next meeting: - 22 March 2022 via Teams

CW, MC and RM found the meeting informative and interesting.

The Chair asked for their thanks to be passed on to all staff and hope they have a good break over Christmas.

