



MINUTES
FOR THE MEETING OF THE
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
OF BRYMORE ACADEMY
HELD ON
TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2023
AT 5.30pm via teams

Actions from Brymore LGB Meeting held on 21 February 2023

Item Reference	Action	Person Responsible	Due Raised
1.3	MT to arrange for VD to contact RG and meet with him, on the day of the mock interviews, to discuss Stand 1 of the ADP.	MT	21/11/22
1.3	JG to follow up on Trust staff use of the College's gym facilities.	JG	21/11/22
1.3	CW to generate a safeguarding report on day's visit to the school in Jan 23 and report back at the next meeting.	CW	21/11/22
3.2	MT to arrange for staff partners to receive safeguarding training and read the KCSiE document.	MT	21/02/23





MINUTES
FROM THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
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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) | |
| ✓ | Paul Moate | (AL) | |
| - | Charlotte Wade | (CW) | |
| ✓ | Mike Cullen | (MC) | |
| - | Anne Constance | (AC) | |

In Attendance

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|------|---------|
| ✓ | Fran Davis | (FD) | (Clerk) |
| ✓ | Chloe Doble | (CD) | |
| ✓ | Kim Hartley | (KH) | |

✓ those present

1. Procedural matters

1.1 Apologies for absence and acceptance/non-acceptance

CW sent apologies – work.
 AC sent apologies – family medical appointment.

Apologies were accepted.

1.2 Declarations of Interest – None

1.3 Minutes from last meeting dated 21 November 22

Minutes were agreed as accurate.



Signed.....

Actions outstanding:

FD to email Governors requesting completion of Declaration of Interest forms – **Completed.**

FD to email Governors to ascertain training needs – **Completed** JG responded and this was forwarded to GJ.

MT to email Governors staff survey results – **Completed** on agenda this evening.

MT to arrange Peer Review report to be sent to Governors – **Completed** on agenda this evening.

MT to arrange for VD to contact RG and meet with him to discuss Stand 1 of the ADP – **Outstanding** RG advised he is coming into school for the mock interviews and asked if these could be combined. MT to liaise with VD.

MT

JG to look into whether Trust staff can use the College’s gym – **Outstanding** JG has sent the facilities link into SR, Trust Ops Lead, but needs to follow up.

JG

FD to add Pupil Premium statement to agenda for next meeting – **Completed.**

JG to put CD in touch with Leesa Hayes who can share their contacts with you – **Completed.**

CW to generate a safeguarding report on day’s visit to the school in Jan 23 and report back at the next meeting – **Outstanding.**

CW

1.4 Matters arising not contained elsewhere on this agenda

None

2 **CEO Reporting Requirements**

2.1 Head teacher Report to include KS4 Predictive Data and Mock headlines

MT gave a brief verbal update on the following points:
Predicated grades.

- P8 was -0.08 last year due to land based results not being included however with these results included it is likely that the Progress 8 score would be around +0.15 which is more in line with previous results.
- Autumn mocks report a progress 8 score of -1.08 which is usual for the first round of mocks however we are confident a higher grade will be achieved after the next set of mocks.



It is pleasing to these results particularly the engineering. However you are in the process of staffing changes; will this impact on engineering.
 MT advised the same two people have been teaching this subject for the past 6 years but AA went down to a 3 day week and still teaching this year. However he will be leaving at the end of the academic year which will be an issue for us as he is an outstanding teacher. We do have someone who is teaching two days a week and we are looking to increase them to 5 days a week but DT teachers are extremely hard to find.

- We are still having knock on effects from Covid as are all schools.

Staffing

- high staff absence but this has not affected teaching and not had to close due to strikes. Staff morale not great generally nationally but here we are fortunate.

Building works

- no significant works this term as the cost of replacing the library and classrooms went up £½ million so this has had to be put on hold.

School news

- Hugely oversubscribed for both boarders and out boarders however our catchment area is now only 2.6 miles which does not now include Bridgwater. Likely to exceed our PAN due to the late application of students with EHCP's.

It was asked if the catchment area affects siblings.
 MT advised siblings are at the top of the list. We have 12 for the next academic year.

- Successful residential trips.

How is the cost-of-living crisis affecting current boarders, have we lost any.

Yes, we will possibly lose two and some have requested paying over a longer time. More parents are struggling.

It was noted that it was great to have the trips back again for the students and good opportunities being offered. However, is there anything for you and the team, outside of the trust, to support staff wellbeing and morale.

MT advised it is a difficult one for us but we did have an inset day based on this topic but our biggest challenge is being aware of how home life is affecting staff. We do have an ethos around supporting teams but the pressures on SLT is high and this is being felt in the Trust as well. They are looking at some home working to enable team to keep on top of strategic work.

Governors were pleased to hear there was a focus on helping the SLT, but it is a sector wide challenge and at least it is being actively looked at to see how it can be resolved.



2.2 Pupil Premium Statement

MT advised this statement had been put together in the Autumn term and will be reviewed in July. However some changes have already occurred. Our biggest focus is Literacy and we are looking at the Thinking Reading programme but it is expensive with a high commitment of 20 staff hrs per week. We are discussing this initiative with the Trust.

Normally use the funding for whole school approaches.

Governors were pleased to see the gap for PP is closing.

2.3 GGS Update

MT gave some background on the GGS approach when visiting schools. We always select an area of development and our focus is metacognition at the moment. We are pleased to report that nothing was picked up that we were not aware of. Feedback has been shared with staff and the need to focus on consistency.

It was asked what the support looks like for the staff needing this. VD will be heading up this but it could feature as part of their GGT target and sharing good practice.

2.4 Staff survey

MT highlights points from the survey:

- There is a degree of unrealistic thinking/expectations of some staff but overall we are the most positive school out of the trust.
- Support Staff feel less supported, but KH launching GG Colleagues and introducing line management processes. We are the first in the Trust to do this.
- Inset training went down reasonably well today.

It was asked does budgeting restrictions impact on staffing such as less TA's.

MT advised we have a good ratio of Teachers and the Trust is very good at supporting our teaching staff and we have not lost any support staff but we could always do with at least 5 more. Being in the Trust helps us hugely but not had to make any changes due to budgeting.

It was shared that one school locally is releasing TA's for part of the week for the training but this helps on costs as rate of pay is less. Is this something that could be replicated here.

We currently have two TA's funded by EHCP's however PLE has agreed for them to remain next year even though the student is leaving. We value our TA's highly.



3 Statutory reports

3.1 Safeguarding

CD gave some highlights:

- Highest areas of concern are home issues, behaviour and suicidal thoughts. We are looking at addressing some of these through workshops and the safeguarding newsletter which goes out once every half term.
- Working with Somerset drug and alcohol service who provide 1:1 support for our students and delivered workshops to our yrs 10 and 11.
- Interactive workshop looking at violence against women and Avon and Somerset Police are coming in as well.
- We are doing very well in offering a good selection of information opportunities for students and parents.
- Number of concerns each month is consistent at about 19/20.
- Level of need – sits at level 1 or 2.
- Biggest barriers are capacity issues and thresholds for external agencies. We are having to do more in school than we can realistically offer.
- CW was unable to make the safeguarding visit but this will be arranged shortly.

It was asked if the workshops are available on Teams for ease of access for parents and students.
CD advised we do offer a live stream in the evening but looking at offering live stream for all parents as it is more accessible especially for working parents.

Somerset drugs and alcohol came into the College and did a presentation. Is there any thought about extending these out to staff as well.

It is a good idea but we are wary of giving staff too much as they would not have the time or capacity to take this in properly.

It was raised that previously getting an appointment via CAMHS was almost impossible, are you indicating it is now getting easier. No unfortunately not, we are therefore looking at charities such as Young Somerset for support. Family Intervention Service and CAMHS do not have capacity and huge waiting lists. Therefore, we are having to manage student support whilst on the waiting list.

3.2 Link Safeguarding Governor Boarding report

EW clarified she is now the boarding governor and CW is responsible for safeguarding but as part of visits do ask questions regarding safeguarding as well.

In the past visits have been made in the evenings but took the decision to look at the morning routines.



The report shared with Governors is informed by a visit that took place in the morning of 22nd November 2022 that included the following activities:

- Observation of boys' morning routine
- Informal conversations with boys during breakfast
- Observation of breakfast in School house
- Meeting with boys from a variety of houses and year groups
- Observation of 1-1 meeting between Mark Thomas and Rob Watts

The report gave detailed information on each area looked at and an update on actions from the previous visit.

With regard to safeguarding:

- The boys stated that they felt safe at school and in boarding
- The boys knew who to speak to if they didn't feel safe and named members of the safeguarding team
- The boys were not aware of the safeguarding governor or their role
- The boys had met the independent listener

Overall, it was clear that Brymore provides a structured environment for boarders which helps create a calm, orderly environment which benefits students. It is also clear to see the dedication of boarding staff and the positive relationships which have been built between staff and students.

EW asked if the individualised plans for staff partners living on the school had been finalised.

MT commented on some of the points raised:

- Breakfast routine has now changed and all students go into the hall which is working much better.
- Residential agreements have gone out and all but one has been returned. We are looking into whether the notice period for houseparents' can be amended to one term rather than one month.
- CW has been reluctant to have a photo on the poster but as long as the name is on there and she comes into school to introduce herself that is fine.
- Review of internet safety is being done this week and the Acceptable Use policy is also going out this week.
- HF, deputy Head of boarding, has joined the SLT meetings. Very impressive member of staff and working well with RW and CD.

It was asked if staff partners receive any safeguarding training or read the KCSiE document.

MT advised this was not currently done but would look at this.

EW was thanked by the Chair for a very comprehensive report.

It was asked if there were any rag ratings that were of concern as Ofsted is due soon.

MT advised boarding is in a strong position however having carried out training today, reporting on low level concerns, it did highlight this area does need some work. However myself, CD and HF are



working on this and the key difference we have made is all concerns about staff now shared with CD and HF and we decide on what should happen rather than just sitting with me.

It was raised there was a lot of information in different places which could have been an issue but appreciate RW has done a lot of work on collating this.

Action – MT to arrange for staff partners to receive safeguarding training and read the KCSiE document.

MT

3.3 SEN

KH gave highlights from the report:

- Number of SEND students: 183 (53.66%)
- Cognition & Learning and Social, emotional and Mental Health are the two areas of highest need.

SEND updates:

- Consultations - Brymore has received 19 consultations for children with EHCPs since September 2022. The LA can choose to name Brymore even where we believe that we cannot provide all elements of this statutory provision.
- Alternative curriculum - There is growing demand for children to follow an alternative curriculum either due to their social emotional mental health needs or cognition and learning needs.
- Additional support - 11 children with an EHCP has been received for September 2023.
- Annual Reviews – 32 reviews have been completed and we have another 21 to do by the end of last year Parents are now requesting a pre-annual review or 2 hr annual review meetings.
- EHC applications - We are currently putting together application requests for EHC assessments for five boys on roll.

It was noted that increase in pre annual review meetings is adding to the pressure on the team. Does there need to be a level of pushback.

KH outlined some issues with a recent family where expectations were becoming unmanageable.

MT highlighted the numbers are massive and the pressure on the team is overwhelming. What is being asked of us is unrealistic.

A Governor noted the alternative curriculum could exasperate the pressure on the school and SEN team.

KH agreed it is a difficult balance to provide a mainstream curriculum and very detailed support for individual boys. It is mainly about capacity as we are not a large school.

It was asked would the alternative curriculum be available to year 7 and onwards from now on



KH advised no unfortunately not. It might be something we consider at a later date. It will be based on individual basis not a case of a whole class of students following a different curriculum. It was asked are we able to be more selective when taking students in.

Unfortunately not, we are overruled if we explain we cannot offer a specific bespoke plan that is on the EHCP.

MT shared how the new curriculum would work. Ultimately there is not enough funding to match pupils' need.

Is this likely to change when the LA become one council.

MT advised the LA have just been inspected and there were 9 areas of concern within SEN and only made progress in 7 of those. However, one of the outstanding areas was the EHCP process.

Governors thanked KH for an informative and detailed report.

3.4 Behaviour, Attendance and Exclusions

- A lot of work has been carried out on sanctioning and recording of level 1 and level 3 to ensure consistency and that nothing is missed. This has resulted in a higher number of behaviour incidents now being recorded. However, it is an improving picture and looking at data from Nov 22, there are significantly less incidents at each level.
- Students now have clearer expectations about what is acceptable behaviour.
- Suspensions are fewer but student numbers have increased. This shows our suspensions are having an impact. We have the lowest in the area and Somerset. MT advised the improvement from last year is still being maintained and behaviour is much better.
- Trialled Stop provision – This is a short term online provision that the Trust provide. Feedback has been positive; therefore we will see if this is something worth continuing with.
- Vaping is the leading reason for suspensions and it is typical across all schools.
- Whole school attendance is above national average and locally. Attendance is monitored weekly and we have a graduated response to attendance concerns. Some parents have been receptive but some not so and we need to work on this.
- Persistent absence (PA) equates to 6 days off per academic year. A lot of our students have been hit by the Christmas bug, which has impacted on figures but they are not the ones who are persistently absent. Our PA figures are lower than last year.
- Our PA figures are impacted by EHCP students or our Looked After Children (LAC) attending alternative provision such as APEX centre but cannot attend Brymore for whatever reason when not at APEX.
- Attendance by our vulnerable groups' students are showing improvements when compared to the same period last year.



It is good to see attendance is starting to improve. However, looking at LAC and ones with EHCP's they are probably the lowest, is there anything specific being offered for them or is it case by a case approach.
CD advised we give highly individualised support to those students.
It is also worth bearing in mind that as we have a smaller cohort one or two students can impact on attendance figures.
It was asked how many students are accessing the APEX centre. We have four but one student is awaiting special schools entry. We are the lowest user of this provision from the Trust. This is largely because we offer most of what is being offered.

MT highlighted this is the first time we have been above national for attendance, for about 8 years, and would like to congratulate CD for formalising the process.
Governors also congratulated CD and the team for their hard work.

4 Date of next meeting: - 13 June 2023 on site

