

**Bedale High School Full Governing Board Meeting
16th March 2021 - Minutes**

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 16th March 2021 facilitated online at 6.00pm
Present: Jan Reed - Joint Chair of Governors (JR), Steve Ingram - Joint Chair of Governors (SI) Tom Kelly – Headteacher (Head) (TK), Kate Loughlin (KL), Lucy Legard (LL), Andy Childe (AC), David Atkinson (DA), Guy Watkins (GW), Linda Donaghy (LD), Rich McGuinness (RM), Christine Inchley (CI), Natalie Mackenzie (NM)
In attendance for all or part of the meeting: Matt Gill – Deputy Head – Curriculum, Denise McFarlane – School Business Manager (DM), Alison Knight (AK), Johanna Daniel (JD) – Clerk to the Governing Body, Nick Reed (NR) – emergency clerking
Apologies: NONE
Governor Question (GQ)/Governor Comment (GC) (colour coding)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction b. Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils. c. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent. d. Agreed by the governors

Item	Actions	Gov
8	Financial impact of yr7 numbers to be discussed at Finance Committee.	
8	Project 600 to remain a priority.	
8	A member of GB to be involved in the interview process for Head of Maths.	
10	To include safeguarding as an action for the September GB meeting.	

No	Item	Action
1	Welcome. Governors were welcomed to the meeting.	
2	Apologies for absence and to determine whether absences should be consented to. All governors were present. Clerk delayed. Clerking undertaken by JR (items 1 - 8) and Nick Reed (items 8-9) until clerks' arrival (mid-point item 9)	
3	Confidentiality and Declarations of interest Governors were reminded of the expectations around confidentiality. There were no declarations of interest in respect of items on today's agenda. SI also reminded governors to also check on website for interests outside of school. Items deemed as confidential will be noted when they arise during the meeting.	
4	Notification of urgent other business. No urgent other business raised	
5	To approve as a correct record the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on 09.02.2021. The Chair advised that the minutes would be considered page by page for both accuracy and matters arising. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the Full Governing Board meeting of the 09/02/21 were APPROVED as an accurate record, and signed by SI, Joint-Chair.	
6	To consider matters arising from the minutes for which there is no separate agenda item and to Review Action Points. Item 3: At the meeting of 9/2/21, Governors had discussed the appropriate level of data required to be presented at FGB meetings. This had raised further governor questions between meetings.	

(Chair).....
Date: 16th March 2021

**Bedale High School Full Governing Board Meeting
16th March 2021 - Minutes**

	<p>GB were keen to ensure they receive sufficient information to have confidence progress is being made in key areas, without being swamped by too much data.</p> <p>SI outlined that although governor leads will become more “expert” on detail in their own areas, the GB needed to be clear how much data we sought from SLT at FGB. Following discussion, governors agreed that all governors need to be able to question and monitor progress, be aware of headline figures, and have sufficient information to understand progress in the groups currently being prioritised in school development.</p> <p>TK reported on the proposed content of the revised HT Reports and how trends and concerns will be escalated. GB agreed to review the matter following the first of the revised HT Report.</p>	
7	<p>Governor Vacancies</p> <p>No staff members had responded to the request to fill the staff vacancy. AC confirmed he was happy to continue as Staff Governor.</p>	
PART ‘B’ – SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT & SAFEGUARDING		
8	<p>Headteacher Report</p> <p>TK spoke to his HT Report (see papers). Particular thanks were made to LL and KL for volunteering during the testing process. TK reiterated that the testing would not have been possible without the commitment of LRF, staff, governor, and community volunteers. The response of students had been high with 82% of families consenting to testing.</p> <p>TK updated GB on the most recent figures for yr7 student numbers in September 2021 (101 which represents 60% of potential students from catchment schools rather than the 73% achieved last year). The numbers are disheartening following the energy put into Project 600 and KS2 at the catchment schools. TK reported that contact had already been made with the primary schools where numbers were lower than anticipated.</p> <p>Reasons including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several students in schools that have not yet applied (5 at Bedale PS) • Siblings at another school • Two from Burneston live closer to other schools, others had scholarships, got into Ripon Grammar or moved away, • Other school seen as “sporty” or “academic” – TK particularly disheartened by this perception as we do have a strong sport provision and our results are better than the school chosen, in recent years. <p>GQ – How many do we currently have in yr7? 106 students TK outlined that now all students were back, work with KS2 could be continued more fully.</p> <p>GC – We have made a big impact on BHS being recognised as a small and caring community school. We now must focus on ensuring the community is aware of our academic achievements.</p> <p>GQ – What is the position regarding the Maths post? TK - Interviews are to be held on Tuesday. One internal and one external candidate.</p> <p>GC – Important that we get the right person as this is a critical post.</p> <p>GQ – Are you prepared to not appoint or re-advertise, if there is not the right candidate? TK - absolutely, the post holder must be better than good enough</p>	

**Bedale High School Full Governing Board Meeting
16th March 2021 - Minutes**

	<p>GC – A number of parents are still taking on private tutors for maths. It would be good to see this number reduce. GB agreed that for such a critical post it would be useful to have a governor involved in process. CI nominated.</p> <p>GQ – How content are we that the time yr11s have left is sufficient to give them a fair crack at another set of PPEs? TK – the difficulty is finding the balance between making students anxious about what curriculum they have missed (and so will not be assessed on) and confidence that they have earned their result. Clear baskets of evidence have been set, with no new material taught, and the PPEs have been delayed from March to provide more revision time. The new PPEs will provide an opportunity to pick up progress since Nov20, but governors reminded that the 2021 assessment process will not just be dependent on the PPE results. For this year group, who have had a disturbed KS4 process, doing the PPEs will be an important experience in exam resilience. For many of our students going on to further education, it is important that they have developed the necessary skills in preparing for and sitting exams.</p> <p>TK – Planning to hold a session with children and parents together to explain the concept of “exams with a safety net” – e.g., if the exam goes badly the teachers still understand the children’s skills and they can be marked accordingly.</p> <p>ACTION: Financial impact of yr7 numbers to be discussed at Finance Committee. Project 600 to remain a priority. A member of GB to be involved in the interview process for Head of Maths.</p>	
9	<p>Is our current curriculum offer reflecting our core values, and meeting the needs of ALL students?</p> <p>SLT gave an overview of the current curriculum, with a view to Governors understanding: The current curriculum offer. How it relates to our core values. And whether it meets the needs of ALL students.</p> <p>It was noted that KS3 currently consists of 4 hours each of Maths and English, 3 hours Science, and then History, Geography, a Modern Foreign Language, PSHE, Games, Computing, Arts, Drama, Music and DT. This should dovetail with GCSEs being: English x2, Maths, Combined Science, Citizenship, four further options and two non-examined subjects. Alternatives to KS4 include some vocational opportunities and working with the PRS, but these are usually only available to pupils with an EHCP. SLT was keen to stress that the curriculum includes experiences, cultures, and behaviours as well as academic subjects. Considering how to go about improving the curriculum, SLT considers the decision to move to a three-year KS3 to be key to this. Rather than struggling to cover statutory content in two years, teachers can now focus on making KS3 a more engaging and valuable learning experience. Teachers will also have more time in their subject specialisms and students should benefit from the curriculum offering a greater range of experiences including more guest speakers, trips out and project work.</p> <p>GQ – Will staff be ready for a two-year KS4? MG – A lot of staff have been on this model before in other settings.</p>	

(Chair).....

Date: 16th March 2021

Bedale High School Full Governing Board Meeting
16th March 2021 - Minutes

QC – As a parent governor, regards three-year KS3 as a positive development for children, while recognising pressure on staff preparing for two-year KS4. The greater breadth of experience of this KS3 will enable pupils to make better-informed GCSE choices.

QC – Delighted that we are delivering education for the sake of education, and not just “teaching to the test” for exams. This is the right thing to do for the school and especially for the children of Bedale.

GQ – Do we have any form of alternative curriculum provision?

TK – Unfortunately, school finances have meant we have been unable to continue sending students to the farm, but we do make arrangements wherever possible, working with the PRS, colleges and Mowbray school on placements, for example, one day a week in construction. But these opportunities have been impacted by covid. We can only generally do this with students on EHCP where additional funding has been allocated.

Three key priorities that informed the decision to move to 3-year KS3:

Ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum

Staff getting more time in their subject specialisms

Some subjects struggling to fit the KS3 curriculum into 2-year

GQ – would staff have flexibility to tackle GCSE topics in Yr9, Increasing engagement and making most of 21st century learning opportunities?

MG stated that this model already happens to some extent in English and Maths, with their spiral curriculums.

MG highlighted that many of the current year 8 students have not been in a DT workshop, some have not had the opportunity to make anything, therefore it is difficult for students to choose their options.

GC - Although this is an issue, the curriculum should not change solely due to this.

TK advised that, following a staff survey, several teachers think of the curriculum as teaching for a test. Although outcomes are crucial there has got to be more than this. This could be the school’s unique selling point. There are so many more skills to be developed rather than learning just for tests.

SI - Questioned does this reflect the school’s core values? And if any parent governors had any thoughts?

GC - With regards to courage commitment and compassion; the school needs to have the courage to make sure they are ambitious in what they want the students to achieve, more variety and not lose sight. The high achiever students want the good grades and want the confidence that their school will let them achieve this. To allow them to aim for the highest possible grades that they can achieve.

GQ - Does the school use social media enough to promote the school and to show the community the grades that the students are achieving?

TK highlighted that the students do have pride in the school, but this could be aimed wider, whereby they have academic pride and have the drive to do well in lessons. The school maybe does not push this enough?

(Chair).....

Date: 16th March 2021

**Bedale High School Full Governing Board Meeting
16th March 2021 - Minutes**

	<p>GQ - Does the school have any competitive rivalry with other schools? TK explained that this is gained really well through sports. However, the school are careful in the way results are promoted in comparison with other schools. This can be revisited again and will be more about pushing how well the school are doing.</p> <p>JR asked the GB - what would be the change that the GB would like to see? What can the school do to create that sense around students and families? What is the school not doing? What is missing?</p> <p>GC - There is nothing particularly missing. It would be possible to chat with the students and see that some have pride and others that would not, which reflects society. Staff work hard to engage with all children. Many of the older students might not chose to do this as it's not deemed as 'cool' but once things are back to normal this will help a lot. For example, once sporting events can take place.</p> <p>GQ -Would it be possible to start a cricket team this year? This might benefit those students that are not engaging. TK advised that this may be possible but depends upon the lockdown rules etc. therefore this has been stalled.</p> <p>GC - There are also other students to consider; 'wallpaper children' those that do their schoolwork and homework and never get into any trouble. MG explained that these children have been considered by the extracurricular lead. If there is any way that the school can build in an hour of enrichment into the day that way each child could engage in something different.</p> <p>GC - This is what success will look like; that every child can gain success. There is a danger that some students parents do not manage extra curriculum opportunities for them to enable them to experience success. Therefore, success needs to take place within curriculum too.</p> <p>GC - If children are part of a school, they will become proud. Never achieving, is detrimental therefore those able to succeed outside of the curriculum will then begin to succeed within the curriculum.</p> <p>GC - It is important that for non-engaging students to engage it is important to embrace more activities that the students are interested in rather than what has been in previous years. TK advised that this will be picked up through the student survey and will highlight their voice.</p> <p>GQ - Have gaming competitions with other schools ever been considered? TK confirmed that this is not something that has been thought about, but it will be interesting if the survey raises this.</p> <p>GC - Some form of gaming could be organised. For example, Fortnite and call of duty. There are specific age restrictions however, this could bring a lot of the students together.</p> <p>JR brought the conversation back to the strategic question. When looking at the curriculum, how does the GB know that the relevant areas are being covered? How does the school ensure that this is reaching everybody? How is this achieved? And how is this tracked?</p> <p>TK raised that there is not a clear answer to this, however this will evolve over time and governors will also get a clearer idea from their link visits, and from participating in our QA procedures and faculty reviews.</p> <p>SI - Asked how the core values will be reflected within the curriculum? How can this be identified?</p>	
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(Chair).....

Date: 16th March 2021

**Bedale High School Full Governing Board Meeting
16th March 2021 - Minutes**

	<p>GC - There are many areas within school such as peer mentoring and engaging within the community which highlights compassion. However, this needs to be evidenced more. Courage can be gained over time as students' progress and move forward. Commitment can be seen through the development of teams such as rugby and showing that they have committed and developed. It will be possible to see this over the next 2 or 3 years and it is important that the GB decide how to evidence this now so that this can be tracked over the coming years.</p> <p>GQ -Could exit interviews be completed with year 11's? TK advised that this is current practice for year 11 students, however this could be tweaked and refined around the core values.</p> <p>GC - School reports are inclusive of the core values. These are being picked up by staff and are clear within the student reports. The staff obviously know their students really well. This a great strength that staff have taken the time to get to know them. AK advised that staff are also encouraged to use language that corresponds with the core values when disciplining students so that this becomes familiar to students. For example, 'you are not showing enough commitment to learning right now' etc. Which is trying to embed this within their everyday language.</p> <p>SI - moved the discussion to the last part of the question regarding meeting the needs of all students. Does the school meet the needs of the superstars as well as the disadvantaged how does the school help them overachieve? GQ - are classes within KS4 mixed ability? MG confirmed that all subjects other than Maths and English are mixed ability. In these subjects teachers teach to the top and scaffold learning for other abilities.</p> <p>GQ - Are you absolutely confident that teachers can differentiate between each level from 9-1? The skills required for level 9 are quite sophisticated. MG advised that the school are confident that teachers know what a grade 9 looks like, however they all need to develop, and this is ongoing in practice. Teachers will always need to do this.</p> <p>SI - What action is going to happen consequently to get the school there? What are the GB's thoughts in relation to this?</p> <p>GC - It would be important to monitor the staff's ability to teach to the higher level. The school needs to be able to monitor how staff are managing and teaching to mixed ability groups. This will ensure that high achievers are learning and lower are still engaging in these subjects.</p> <p>GC - It would also be beneficial to look at how the middle leaders are developing teachers in teaching the values and are understanding the detail of grading. It would be constructive for governors to look at this.</p> <p>GC- It is also important that the students that drift through school are identified, it is not clear how this can be measured? But they can certainly be identified.</p>	
PART 'C' – POLICIES & STATUTORY REPORTS		
10	<p>NYCC Safeguarding Audit AK explained that the safeguarding audit must be completed every 2 years. The North Yorkshire safeguarding partnership self-assessment tool has various elements of safeguarding whereby</p>	

(Chair).....

Date: 16th March 2021

**Bedale High School Full Governing Board Meeting
16th March 2021 - Minutes**

	<p>the school rates on a scale where they are and must evidence this with either documents or procedures.</p> <p>The school does not have to submit this, but it is a working document to be held by the school. It must be ratified by AK, TK and governors. This is an opportunity for governors to see where the school currently stands and what it needs to do moving forward.</p> <p>Questions GQ do you know if last year's action plan was actioned? TK explained that this was cross referenced with the safeguarding report and action plan.</p> <p>GQ do the questions change every year? Are these actions that have not been actioned before? The document states that one DBS is an off-site provision, and it says ASAP what does this mean? and has it been done already? Also, who checks this has been done in September? Is this an action point in September to confirm this to the GB that this has been done?</p> <p>AK advised that the alternative provision is the PRS in Northallerton are the online provision.</p> <p>GC in relation to the other questions and the long-term action points this could be placed on the agenda for September so that this can be confirmed that they have been actioned. It is important that safeguarding timelines do not slip.</p> <p>JR advised that DA and RM are completing safeguarding training. Governors are also being asked to double check email boxes to check that all training is up to date.</p> <p>ACTION: include safeguarding as an 'action' for the September GB meeting. The policy was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by Governors for approval</p>	
PART 'D' – FINANCE		
<p>11</p>	<p>Schools Financial Values Statement DR explained that the annual report was previously a list of questions. The dashboard is not presenting anything of concern.</p> <p>Questions None</p> <p>The Schools Financial Values Statement was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by Governors for approval</p>	
PART 'F' – OTHER BUSINESS		
<p>12</p>	<p>Any Matters arising from item 4 The next meeting will include feedback from link meetings and the reports from visits. Governors were asked to read these before the next meeting.</p> <p>TK raised that the next meeting is only 9 school days away from the current meeting due to the Easter holidays.</p> <p>JR advised that the paper deadline is 2nd April</p> <p>GQ will there be a head teacher report at every meeting?</p>	

(Chair).....

Date: 16th March 2021

**Bedale High School Full Governing Board Meeting
16th March 2021 - Minutes**

	<p>JR confirmed that this needs to be tested as we try the new framework, but the next HT is on the agenda for the meeting of 11th May.</p> <p>GQ what is the best way for governors to prepare for the strategic question? Should governors be looking at Ofsted and what they might look for in other competitive schools in the area? What are the expectations for this?</p> <p>JR advise that this is a learning process for the GB and that this can depend on the strategic question. The next strategic question is - Are we offering the best opportunities for ALL our students to set high personal aspirations, and gain the skills and knowledge they will need regionally and nationally?</p>	
13	<p>Date of next FGB meeting: 13th April 2021 Items carried forward to February FGB: N/A</p>	
18	<p>The meeting closed at 8.00pm.</p>	