

MINSTHORPE ACADEMY TRUST
MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

26th March 2013 @ 4:30PM

THOSE PRESENT OR ABSENT

Mrs B Semper Chair of Governors	✓	Mrs A-M Spencer Vice Chair of Governors	✓
Mrs T Boughen	✓	Mr N Hawkins	Apologies
Mr T Cawthorne	✓	Mr B Johnson	✓
Mrs D Cornwell	✓	Mrs S Lewis	✓
Mrs G Earith	✓	Mr S Newton	✓
Mrs W Evans	✓	Mr I Oxley	Apologies
Mrs V Gilmore	✓	Ms A Parkinson	Apologies
Mr J Gregory (Principal)	✓	Mr T Rutter	Apologies
12/16 Governors present. This meeting is quorate.			

ALSO INVITED

Mrs J Germain	Clerk to the meeting	✓
Mrs E Fairhurst	Associate Governor	✓
Ms H Williams	Associate Governor	Apologies
Mr B Dickinson	Associate Governor	✓

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Welcome by the Vice Chair

The Vice Chair opened the meeting by thanking all for their attendance and welcomed Mrs Cornwell to her first meeting of the Governing body. Introductions were made around the table for the benefit of Mrs Cornwell.

1 Election of Chair

Following Mr Parkinson's resignation as Chair on 21st December 2012, and in accordance with the Articles of Association, Governors were required to elect a Chair from their number

The names of those proposed for Chair, those proposing and those seconding the proposals were requested.

Proposed Mrs B Semper

Proposed by Mr J Gregory

Seconded by Mrs W Evans and Mr T Cawthorne

As there had been only one proposed and seconded nominee, Mrs B Semper was duly elected as Chair of the Governing Body for Minsthorpe Academy. The remainder of the meeting was chaired by Mrs Semper.

2 Conflicts of Interest

For the benefit of the new Governor and as a recap to all, an explanation was given by Mrs Germain regarding what constituted a conflict of interest.

There were no conflicts of interest

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr N Hawkins, Mr I Oxley, Miss A Parkinson and Mr T Rutter.

Chair proposed these absences were consented to.

RESOLVED#5

The Governors resolved to consent to the absences of Mr N Hawkins, Mr I Oxley, Miss A Parkinson and Mr T Rutter.

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 11.12.12

Governors were asked to confirm they had received and read the draft copy of the minutes from the meeting held on the 11th December 2012. Corrections were requested by the Chair, of which there were none.

All Governors present confirmed the receipt and accuracy of the minutes, resulting in their approval to be signed as a correct record of the meeting.

RESOLVED #6

The Governors resolve that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2012 be signed as a correct record.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes (not included below)

The Principal updated Governors regarding an item raised within agenda item 12 ii (Principal's Report) of the minutes approved above. This agenda item had informed Governors of College's aspirations to develop a School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) programme and College had sought the Governors' approval to continue with the process, which had been given. Mrs C Yates (Assistant Principal HR) had secured the interest and involvement of 10 schools, from across all phases of education. College have already submitted an outline bid, this has been accepted and we have been invited to submit a full and detailed proposal. The work still to be undertaken by Mrs Yates to complete the process was summarised to the meeting. College will be informed in June of the outcome of the bid.

If successful, College will be able to teach and deliver teacher training, with accreditation of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Delivery would commence from September 2014.

Governors will be informed of any developments.

6 Correspondence

College was informed of the resignation of Mr S Parkinson as Chair, Member and Director of Minsthorpe Academy Trust via a hand delivered letter on Friday, 21.12.12. Governors were informed the same day of his decision.

Following the resignation of Chair, Mrs Spencer had been called upon to respond to a complaint letter received in College. The letter was from a CAMHS worker and regarding a behaviour contract College had put in place for a vulnerable student, which the complainant felt should have been handled differently. College believed the manner in which the complaint had been raised could have been addressed more appropriately. The letter was also inappropriately presented at a formal meeting and included unsubstantiated allegations, with a number of working partners of the College copied into the letter. The complainant arrived in College the day after the initial letter had been received to retract the complaint. However the Principal initiated a full investigation into the allegations which were found to be completely unsubstantiated. College's response, on Mrs Spencer's behalf, detailed the good work of the College with all outside agencies. The parents of the student were happy with the support in place in College for the student. The allegations were the sole opinion of the CAMHS worker.

In summary, College investigated and produced an appropriate response, which was approved by Mrs Spencer prior to posting. All those included in the original mailing received a copy of the response.

7 Chairs Actions

In the Chair's absence Mrs Spencer attended a Student Behaviour and Discipline meeting, along with a Staff Disciplinary, reports of which are available in agenda item 12.

8 Membership Changes

Membership changes since the December meeting were confirmed and detailed below:

- Resignation – Mr S Parkinson

9 Board Changes

Board changes since the December meeting were confirmed. These included:

- Resignation – Mr S Parkinson
- Appointment – Mrs D Cornwell

10 Statutory Books and Filings

A request was made to the Company Secretary to lodge the necessary amendments at Companies House.

11 Principal's Report

vi) Student Safety and Wellbeing Update

Prior to the meeting, Mrs S Adams (Assistant Principal, Student Safety and Wellbeing) had provided Governors with a 'Safeguarding Report' which detailed the number of students who were the subject of Child Protection (CP) plans, Child in Need (CIN) plans or Common Access Framework (CAF). No identifying details were supplied and comparisons can be made by Governors to equivalent information provided for previous meetings.

These documents are for information only.

Mrs Adams had also provided Governors with information relating to both the onsite activities and offsite visits record. The offsite visit record illustrated College continued to have a full armoury of trips and visits for students. Within the onsite visit record, entries were identified as being either enrichment (E) or as contributing to the course (CR). Data provided indicated College had a raft of enrichment activities to cater for all students, including our most vulnerable.

vii) Equality Policies

Mrs E Fairhurst (Vice Principal, Leading Learning) had led a working party to review the Single Equality Policy following a training session held within College. The original policy was very lengthy and, following advice from an appropriate professional, a much more concise document had been developed. The working party had gone to great lengths to consult with the full staff body and a selection of students who were hand-picked as they held some of the protected characteristics, along with a selection of random parents. Minimal responses and comments were received in response to the invite to consult.

Behind the policy lies an action plan which will run over three years, and which is already underway.

The three equality aims were agreed amongst the working party, which had been formed from staff volunteers.

The Curriculum Policy is not required legally, although it is good practise to have one. This policy was approved by the Standards and Students Committee in December, however was omitted in error from resolution at the December meeting of the Full Governing Body.

Again the aims were agreed by the Equality Working Party, and consultation has taken place with a wide range of stakeholders.

Mr Gregory proposed the Governors resolve to approve both the Single Equality Policy and the Curriculum Policy. Mrs Spencer seconded this proposal and this was further confirmed by a full show of hands.

RESOLVED #7

The Governors resolve to adopt the Single Equality Policy and the Curriculum Policy.

viii) Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

Mr Gregory delivered this section on behalf of Ms Williams, who has given her apologies due to illness.

The meeting was informed that whilst SEFs were optional, OFSTED Inspectors would be surprised if they were not presented with one during an inspection.

Governors were referred to the SEF provided to them prior to this meeting and key information was highlighted and included:

- the context of the College (deprivation indicator of 0.32 in 2012, resulting in the College being placed in the 70th percentile nationally).
- The high incidence of SEN students who require support of some kind (90th percentile nationally).
- Aspirational target setting and knowing where the College and our students are, along with a coherent centrally coordinated intervention programme.
- In-depth data analysis by a specialist team supplied to Curriculum Areas.

Achievement Section

The importance of the impact of the work underway and the intervention programmes in place needs to be evidenced both to Governors and OFSTED. In Maths 63% of students have currently made expected progress, with some time to go until the end of the academic year. Considering the national average last year was 68%, we are currently 5% behind this. Maths had a good internal inspection week recently, Quality of Teaching being judged as 'good'. In English 77% of students are currently making expected progress with the National in 2012 being at 66%, and again there is still some time to go.

The intervention put in place is beginning to have an impact on progress, with the same occurring in other subject areas. College is confident it will be able to engage with OFSTED in conversations regarding the progress of our students.

Leadership and Management Section

The increase in results indicates that Leadership and Management at all levels is also beginning to have an impact and we continue to push forward with optimism.

Post 16 has made huge strides, with an increase in the Points per Candidate (PPC) for last year and figures continue to look good for this year. 33% of observations in Post 16 lessons were judged to be outstanding. Lesson observations would indicate teaching over time is pointing towards good.

Mr Gregory confirmed he had selected just a few key points from the document and requested Governors become familiar with the content of the document. The role of the Governors was to be abreast of these facts and figures and to challenge the College Leadership often.

Mr Cawthorne requested Mr Gregory's response to recent headlines suggesting students studying in Hong Kong were, on average, two years ahead of the age groups in the UK.

Mr Gregory responded by suggesting it would not be comparing like with like, and that no other country offers the criticality of inspections that the UK does. A discussion took place regarding the different approaches to education.

Mr Gregory advised Governors they need to be satisfied that the College was updating them appropriately of the work being undertaken in College, and the Staff Governors would confirm this.

Mrs Spencer added the information gave a good idea of the improvements seen in teaching, however pointed out this was purely by observation. Mr Cawthorne confirmed his pride to be associated with the College, and that improvements had come in leaps and bounds and that staff strive to get the best from the students and in the large part succeed.

Mr Gregory informed the Governors they need to be prepared to speak to OFSTED Inspectors knowledgeably, as well as positively about the College. The 2012 inspection under the new framework required a higher level of understanding about the College's performance.

Mrs Evans added that Governors should show they have the ability to challenge the College. Mr Johnson suggested that during the meeting with the previous Inspectors, whatever Governors said, it was twisted and used against the College.

Governors were informed they need to show they could and did challenge College, along with the depth of this challenge. This should be done with rigorous, appropriate questioning. The information just given to Governors regarding progress in Maths and English was used as an example. Governors should be asking why there is such a difference in the progress made in the two curriculum areas (77% and 63%). If questioned College could answer with the following information:

- Previously a difficult staffing situation in Maths, with long term absences and maternity leave
- Staffing has been increased and enhanced with a new AST
- Splitting the KS3/4/5 roles
- GTP in Maths

- Specialist HLTA
- Specialist TA
- Additional teacher

This is all capacity the department has never had before, and all increased and introduced in one year. In English, some of these measures have been in place for some time.

Mrs Fairhurst added that it is absolutely vital that Governors understand the College will not be graded as good on one year's results, and inspectors could look at 3 years results. A reality check would be that whilst these results and progress levels were significantly improved, they may not achieve a judgement of Good based just on one year's performance. We will be demonstrating that results to come lower down the College are also looking very promising which should support good teaching over time.

ix) College Strategic Plan (CSP)

Governors were presented with the CSP at a previous meeting where it was resolved pending some small but significant changes suggested by Mrs Spencer.

Again at a previous meeting where the Governors were presented with the MAT accounts, the accountants have suggested Minsthorpe Charitable Trust (MCT) came under the auspices of MAT. This is not the case and was noted in the final report.

To make it absolutely crystal clear these are separate trusts, all references to the MCT are to be removed from any policy of the MAT. The business of each of the trusts is clearly identified in the respective Articles of Association. Going forward the CSP cannot name or reference the Community Dimensions.

Mr Gregory is proposing a small paragraph of the 'Through our role as' section on the front page of the CSP, which refers to the MCT, is removed along with the final three pages of the document which will then form a stand-alone CSP for the MCT.

This will not affect in any way how the College operates, this is simply a fiscal/legal delineation.

Without the need to formally resolve the issue, Mr Gregory requested Governors approve the revised College Strategic plan.

Governors approved the revisions.

x) Whole College Tracker

Mrs Fairhurst informed the meeting the Governors who are part of the Standards and Students Committee have already seen the data she was about to present. To put the information into context, one of the most important areas of an Inspection is the quality of teaching. College has always held a database of lesson observation grades and judgements for all teaching staff. However Mrs Fairhurst had felt the data held did not allow Leadership to dig deep enough, to enable appropriate monitoring and tracking. The College's Data Manager has developed the new tracker based on MCC requirements.

Governors were requested to keep any information strictly confidential. Mrs Fairhurst displayed the tracker and explained the headings, gradings and departmental filtering facility. The first tab displayed the collated analysis of the second tab, which was the raw data and where information is input into the system.

All teaching staff should have 2 formal (graded) observations and one performance management/appraisal observation. In an ideal world all staff would have three graded observations, however guidance relating to 'union action short of strike action' prevents this.

During an Inspection joint observations between the Principal and the Inspectors will ensure standardisation.

Further developments with the spread sheet would allow the classes taught to be displayed, along with residuals, and link in with appraisal information.

Leadership are taking every opportunity to attend training sessions regarding observing lessons, and now carry out joint observations with CTLs and Department TLRs. Hopefully staff will see that observations are developmental and done with them, and not to them.

Staff who are identified as having observations that are consistently graded a 3, or requires improvement, form part of the Securing Good group, a developmental programme to lead them to achieving consistently good lessons. Currently the group involves 16 members of staff and coaches who have consistently achieved outstanding lessons. Some of these 16 staff will be the subject of case studies to produce for Inspectors, should we need to.

The spread sheet will indicate the quality of teaching over time. The current framework requires more rigour to achieve good or better. However, despite all the data, it is still about what inspectors see on the day.

Mrs Semper advised it was up to Governors to ensure they understood what the data was telling them, to understand the percentage of good or better and the number of 'inadequate gradings.

Mrs Fairhurst requested questions from Governors.

Governors were advised of the aims (practical strategies for lessons) of the INSET Evenings arranged for April and June, and that they were most welcome to attend these. Hopefully if Inspectors were to ask how Governors knew were standard the teaching and learning is currently at in Minsthorpe, Governors will be able to discuss the tracker. If asked what the Principal would do to address consistently poor teaching, a last resort is the College's capability process. The Governors were advised of the level of dialogue Inspectors would require of them, and how to substantiate what is occurring in College.

An anonymised version of the tracker would be placed in the new Governors area on Sharepoint and Governors were encouraged to familiarise themselves with the format and ask questions of their link areas as necessary.

12 Reports of Committees

Governors had been provided with the many policies and minutes requiring approval and resolving prior to the meeting. Rather than have a resolution for each item, it was suggested all would be resolved together.

- i) Behaviour and Discipline Committee 06.12.12 Year 11 Student
- ii) Behaviour and Discipline Committee 18.01.13 (Over 5 Day Review)
- iii) Pay and Personnel Committee 05.03.13
Within these minutes it was noted in the Honorarium Report, which detailed the one member of the Support Staff with an honorarium, and that this would continue until April 2013.
- iv) Behaviour and Discipline Committee 11.03.13
- v) Staff Disciplinary Hearing 22.01.13 and Appeal 11.03.13
- vi) Resources Committee 12.03.13
Within these minutes clarification had been sought regarding the purchase and installation of software to enable information to be extracted from SIMS. Confirmation was given by the Business Director that the software had been purchased and installed. Also an additional column will be added to the Responsible Officer's report to allow confirmation that his recommendations had been taken forward and acted on.
- vii) Standards and Students 19.03.13

Mr Gregory proposed the Governors approve the resolutions in the Committee minutes. Mr Cawthorne seconded this proposal, which was further supported by a full show of hands.

RESOLVED #8

The Governors resolve to approve the resolutions in the Committee minutes.

13 Governor Training and Development

Mr Cawthorne informed the meeting the process of training for Governors had changed since the transfer to Academy status, therefore Mr Cawthorne suggested and requested Governors with any training needs or suggestions contact the Clerk to the Governors in the first instance. The Governors Training SLA should be available on the LA VLE for download.

The Clerk informed the meeting that a bespoke training session was to be organised to enable Governors to access key College documents, as well as documents for meetings, from the College's Sharepoint facility. Governors will be contacted shortly with the details.

14 Confirmation of Time and Date of Next Meeting

Governors noted the date of the next meeting of the Full Governing Body is Tuesday, 16th July 2013.

15 AOB

There were no requests for AOB

16 Identification of Confidential Items.

There were no confidential items.

Congratulations were offered to Mrs Semper, on her instalment as Chair of Governors, along with assurances of the Governors' full backing and support.

Thanks were given on behalf of the Governing Body to Mrs Spencer, who stepped into the role of Chair during an awkward time, and did a sterling job.

The meeting closed at 5:50pm.

Signed

Beverly L. Semper.

B Semper
Chair of Governors