

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting
Monday 20th May 2024 at 6.00pm
In-person meeting

Governors present: Reem Al Rasheed, Jo Arrowsmith, Anne Canning, Mark Chapman (*Chair*), Helen da Silva, Jo Davey (*Co-headteacher*), Tessa Hauswedell, Zoe Judge (*Co-headteacher*), Ian Macaulay, Antonia Shortall

Staff present: Darrel Barsby, Emily Brooks, Nofer Fari, Florence Herrero, Stewart Hesse, Kirsty Holder, Louise Prodromou*, David Robson*, Kirsten Sullivan
** denotes online attendance*

Also present: Sam Murray (*Clerk*)

1. Apologies were received and accepted from Rachel Howarth and Lorraine Hudson.

2. Declaration of interests

There were no meeting specific declarations of interest made by anyone present. Governors were reminded to ensure their entry in the register of business interests was kept up to date.

3. CoHeadteachers' report

Governors had received a copy of the CoHeadteachers' written report. The following points from the report were highlighted:

Contextual data for the school was shared and governors noted an increase in the number of students with medical conditions and a change in student prior attainment. Prior attainment is more in line with national figures rather than the previous high levels of students with high prior attainment.

Governors also noted the increase in home to school distance for Year 7 admissions which is now approximately 1 mile and reflects the falling rolls in London primary schools. Governors suggested that it would be helpful if the CoHeadteachers report could include some national markers to go alongside the school contextual data.

Action: CoHeads' report to include some national markers for contextual data

Attendance data shows a whole school figure of 91.4% to date. Last academic year the figure was 90% so a small increase. There is a focus on Year 7 which has a number of students with significant school attendance issues. Year 10 has high mobility and this has impacted attendance figures for this year group.

Staffing data for starters, leavers, vacancies and current recruitment were shared. CoHeads noted that this is a busy time of year for recruitment but so far everything is going well. CoHeads commented that teacher requests for sabbaticals and reduced working hours seem higher than usual and reflect current national trends for teacher retention.

In response to a governor question, CoHeads confirmed that the school follows the Haringey model policy when dealing with requests for flexible working from staff.

Inclusion and behaviour data for suspensions, managed moves and referrals to alternative provision were shared and considered by governors. CoHeads highlighted work to review the number of suspensions for SEND students. The SEND annual report to the next FGB meeting will also consider behaviour.

Data for referrals to the school's own Finch provision were shared. CoHeads noted that Finch has also become a valued local resource and is used regularly by several local schools.

Data for student mobility shows that there is still greater movement on and off roll than previously. CoHeads highlighted some of the issues this creates including admitting students who may be on their second or third local secondary school; Haringey admissions are monitoring frequent moves between local schools. There is also an increase in the number of parents electing to home educate their children.

3.1 Safeguarding update

Data for different categories of referrals to MyConcern were shared with governors. KS noted that 'home issues' continue to be a significant area of referral for the school as this can be issues related to the student, parents/family members or the home environment. KS highlighted that wellbeing and mental health needs are significant across the school and impact on student attendance and behaviour. The Safeguarding link governor (MC) had recently met with KS for an update and gave feedback to governors on the meeting. The link meeting next term will include a review of the single central record.

KS gave a verbal update on mental health provision and referrals. CoHeads noted that this has become an area of significant expenditure for the school but are aware that there is more need than these services can cover. Statutory services for mental health support are severely stretched.

3.2 Standards update

An evaluation of the outcomes from the monitoring mechanisms this term (appraisals, progress walks, work scrutiny, a parent survey and a school improvement partner (SIP) visit) have been reviewed and reported. Headlines from the report include: the curriculum is, in most areas, consistently implemented; there is some variability in the application of the teaching & learning policy, the assessment policy and the presentation guidelines. HODs are meeting senior leaders to explore the findings and to look at required actions. The meetings will also be used to create tailored CPD sessions for staff. Feedback from the SIP visit was also shared with governors.

3.3 Progress data

Year 11 update - governors received a detailed report setting out progress data from April 2024 (progress point 6). DB presented the headline data which shows a positive picture and movement in all areas from progress point 5. A8 score of 57.65 (summer 2023 was 63) Progress 8 score of +0.51 (summer 2023 was 0.62). Governors considered the data for the vulnerable and target groups. The report set out interventions that have been in place since Y11 mock exams including: walking talking mock exams, targeted group and subject interventions and exam day support including breakfast revision sessions. Y11 lessons continue during study leave for those students who wish to attend. Link governors had met to discuss the data report in detail with SH and DB.

Year 13 update – governors received a detailed report setting out progress data from April 2024 (progress point 6). DR presented the headlines including: the ALPS score is identical to this stage last year and where expected at this stage of exam courses. Significant number of students are working hard and are on track for success and a good range of subjects are performing well. 34 students are above target in all subjects, 76 students on track in all subjects and 43 below in all subjects. Targeted interventions after progress point 5 have had a positive impact for some students. Challenges include a group of students at risk of E/U grades where attendance, engagement or mental health issues are having an impact. Governors considered subject data and heard from DR about actions and work underway to bring about improvements.

A Staff governor commented that exams are starting earlier which has an impact on the amount of time for teaching all the content.

Governors thanked DB and DR for the detailed data reports.

3.4 School Improvement Plan 2023-24: Mid-Term Review

Governors received a written report from the CoHeadteachers updating them on progress against targets in the SIP. Governors noted the content and agreed to send any follow up questions to the CoHeadteachers after the meeting. Link governors will also address any relevant areas in their next link meetings.

4. Budget 2024-25 for approval

Governors received a set of papers for presentation and approval of the budget. Link governors had met with LP and CoHeadteachers to consider and review the documents and financial information during the budget setting process. LP outlined some adjustments to the final figures based on the latest advice from the LA/DfE. The budget presented is balanced but tight and based on advice from the LA and the DfE in terms of assumptions for funding and expenditure. The Chair added that there are still unknowns in the figures but the budget is based on a set of reasonable assumptions, the risk is understood and the budget will be closely and carefully monitored and tracked. **Governors approved the budget 2024-25 as presented.**

4.1 Service level agreements for approval

Governors received information on the renewal of SLAs for catering and energy supply. LP outlined the process for gathering costs and quotes and ensuring best value for the school. Governors were pleased to note that the new catering SLA with Harrison Catering includes payment of the London Living Wage to staff.

Catering SLA – approved.

Energy SLA – approved.

5. Additional Resourced Provision (ARP)

Governors received a report setting out a proposal from the CoHeadteachers for a Fortismere ARP from September 2026 subject to the agreement of an acceptable SLA with Haringey Local Authority.

In response to a governor question about the school rebuilding programme project and a possible ARP, the CoHeads advised that the DfE is aware of the LA proposal for an ARP and it is part of their early conversations with Haringey LA, however the SRP project would be the priority.

Governors asked questions about consultations with staff and CoHeads outlined the range of professionals with experience of ARPs, internally and externally, that they had spoken to about the proposal. CoHeads will communicate with the whole staff

body and parent/carers if the proposal moves to the next stage as there are still a lot of unknowns at this current stage.

The terms and conditions of the governing SLA need to be discussed and established before a final decision can be made.

The Chair noted that there is a definite need for this type of provision within the borough and that in general terms, governors are positive about the prospect of developing an ARP on site but in the context of the school rebuilding programme there is some hesitancy. Governors **agreed** the proposal in principle and subject to review and approval of the final SLA and funding terms. Further updates will come to future FGB meetings.

6. Sixth Form Offer and Entry Requirements

Governors received a written paper setting out a proposed sixth form offer and entry requirements for September 2025. A governors/SLT working party has explored and discussed the issues and the proposal. DR set out the context of the proposal. The post-16 qualifications landscape is changing with many BTEC Level 3 courses ceasing from 2025 and new Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQs) starting. The school wants to keep its current broad offer but there are some subjects with very small student numbers. Sixth form recruitment is competitive and Fortismere is close to a number of high performing alternatives. The proposed offer:

- 3 A level pathway: 5 x Grade 5s but require an average point score of 5.5 across the best 8 GCSEs. Subject specific entry requirements will also apply.
- 2 A levels & 1 AAQ pathway: 5 x Grade 5s. Subject specific entry requirements will also apply.
- 4 A level pathway: Agreed on an individual case by case basis as per current policy.

The school will only offer A level based pathways but to ensure that students who do not meet the academic entry requirements have access to a range of suitable alternatives, the school will build strong partnerships with other local providers and provide guidance and support in Year 11.

DR explained that the AAQ is not a direct replacement for the BTEC level 3; students who would have taken a BTEC course will have to access this level of course at a further education college.

A governor asked if student numbers were expected to fall as a result of the changes. DR advised that there may be some change in numbers but is hopeful that while there will no longer be the BTEC cohort, some students who currently leave after Y11 may now stay on.

In response to a governor question about why some current Fortismere students leave after Y11, DR commented that there is a perception that at other local sixth forms/colleges, the environment will be more academic and this will help to get places at the top universities. CoHeads added that they had spoken to the current Y11 about their plans and some who were leaving Fortismere were going on to do very specific courses that the school would never be able to provide.

A governor asked if competitive university courses would accept AAQs, DR believes that as universities currently accept a BTEC level 3 as an A level equivalent he does not expect this to change when AAQs are introduced.

In response to a governor question about AAQ subjects, DR explained that schools are still waiting for information from the DfE about the courses that will be offered for teaching from 2025.

Governors discussed the overall strategic direction for the sixth form and the implication of the changes for students not meeting the entry requirements. DR stressed the importance of students having clear pathways and good advice and guidance about how to access them as this is more beneficial than following courses that are not suitable.

Governors agreed to decide the issue by voting - **the majority of governors present voted to support the sixth form proposal as presented.**

7. Policies for approval

Behaviour policy plus Appendices – the policy and the supporting Appendices have been reviewed. DfE behaviour advice and other statutory guidance documents have been followed. Several policies that were standalone policies have now been incorporated in the Appendices including: Drugs policy and Anti-bullying policy.

Governors approved the policy and appendices.

8. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 22nd March 2024 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

8.1 Matters arising

There are no outstanding actions from the last meeting.

9. Date of next meeting: Friday 5th July 7.45am

Part One Meeting closed