

Harris Academy at Peckham Governing Body

Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body held at the Academy on Wednesday 1 April 2009.

PRESENT

GOVERNORS:

	Mr Bruce Noble (Chairman)	
Mr Kevin Browne		Mr Sunny Lambe
Mr Jaimie D'Cruz		Mrs Cathy Loxton
Mr Simon Gick		Mr Dan Moynihan
Lady Pauline Harris		Mrs Vicky O'Keeffe
Mr Peter Holmes		

Others in attendance: Mr Simon Bridgland (Vice Principal), Mrs Kay Brooker (Finance Officer), Mr Steven Davidson (Interim Vice Principal), Mr Nigel Martin (Vice Principal) and Ms Monica Vaciannia (DCSF representative).

CLERK: Mr Michael Johnson

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Michael Collins (DCSF), Ms Vicky Gough (Governor), Mr Dominic Herrington (Governor), Miss Joanna Pearson (Governor), Mr Steve Sekiziyivu (Governor), Cllr Bob Skelly (Governor) and Ms Vivolyn Walker (Vice Principal).

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest in matters under consideration were received.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 3 November 2008 had been sent to governors prior to the meeting.

3.1 Approval

Resolved -

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2008 be signed as a correct record.

3.2 Matters Arising

The Chair referred to the minute about budgetary issues at page 138 and reported that the teething problems with the new accounting system were now broadly resolved. With reference to the same minute Mrs Brooker reported that the Academy had started to receive payments of its allocation of national challenge funding.

The Chair asked the Principal to give an update on progress with the areas for development set out at page 139. The Principal took governors through each of the eleven areas for development explaining how much progress had been made for each area.

With reference to minute 10 (Exclusion Hearings) it was reported that Vicky O’Keeffe, Bob Skelly and Bruce Noble had attended a training session provided by the local authority to update governors on the latest DCSF guidance on exclusions.

The Chair also referred to minute 12 (Governor Training) and thanked governors for attending the training session prior to this meeting on community cohesion and working with the community. The training was arranged through the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT).

4. Chairman’s Comments

The Chairman thanked Cathy Loxton for taking on the role of Executive Principal at short notice. The Chair also thanked Peter Holmes, the Chair of Harris Academy Bermondsey, for agreeing to the arrangement. The Chair commented that Cathy’s open style was improving staff morale and having a positive impact on the students.

The Executive Principal (Cathy Loxton) said she was really enjoying the work and that everyone had made her very welcome. She paid particular tribute to the senior staff for their support.

The Chair reported on the recruitment process for a Principal. The selection panel was Dan Moynihan, Vicky Gough, Bob Skelly, Bruce Noble, Phil Saunders and the Academy’s SIP. The Chair explained that the panel was looking to appoint either someone who was very experienced or someone who was promising but required support and coaching into the role. If the person appointed required support, Cathy Loxton had agreed to continue as Executive Principal until the period of support and coaching was completed.

Governors asked the Executive Principal to keep staff informed of progress with the recruitment process.

The Chair reported on admissions and explained that the current number of

applications for September 2009 was 183. The Chair commented that as this was short of the 240 places available it was a matter of concern. He spoke of the need to promote more vigorously the Academy's achievements and explained that Zoe Browne who had recently been appointed to the communications post would lead on marketing.

The Chair gave an update on the development of a new website for the Academy. Governors were shown examples of how pages of the website would look.

The Chair reminded governors that minutes of Governing Body meetings were added to the website once they had been approved by governors at their next meeting. This could mean minutes of meetings not being available to the public for up to three months after a meeting. However draft minutes were produced soon after meetings and if governors agreed these could be added to the website. Governors agreed that the draft minutes of meetings of the Governing Body should be available on the website once they had been approved by the Chair.

5. Focus Consultancy Ltd Report – A Centre of Excellence and a Centre of Community

The Focus Consultancy Ltd Report had been sent to governors in advance of the meeting.

It was agreed that the report be taken as read and that attention be given to the recommendations which were set out on pages 10 and 11. The Chair asked the Executive Principal to report on progress in addressing the recommendations.

The Executive Principal reported on each of the recommendations to further improve the work of the Academy as follows:

- An audit of the management of behaviour had been carried out and staff had worked on a positive management programme that includes restorative justice approaches into behaviour management systems during two training days.
- Work would be undertaken next term on incorporating into staff CPD (Continual Professional Development) how to better recognise and manage bullying.
- A system of support using 6th formers as 'buddies' to ensure Year 7's settle in well was being developed.
- Lunchtime activities were organised and available for students.
- There was a good staff presence at shared public spaces during

lunch and break time. An on-call system of senior managers had been introduced to deal with incidents immediately.

- The CCTV system had been extended to further support monitoring of corridor behaviour.
- The development of a peer mediation service to assist with conflict resolution was a priority for next term.
- Progress is being made to develop a comprehensive communication strategy to ensure good news about the Academy and good practice within the Academy are celebrated and reported. A member of staff had been appointed to lead on communications.
- Work is still to be done on the Extended School Programme.

Governors discussed making the report available to the wider community.

Resolved –

That the Focus Consultancy Limited report to Governors – A Centre of Excellence and a Centre of Community – should be made available to the public after the conclusion of the mediation process with Ms Fergus in which the report will be presented.

6. Principal's Report

The Principal's Report to Governors – Spring Term 2009 had been sent to governors before the meeting.

The main items reported were:

An Update on Results

The Executive Principal referred governors to a paper attached to her report setting out the 2008 Key Stage 4 results for the maintained secondary schools in Southwark. The schools were listed in rank order according to their contextual value added score (CVA), which measures the progress made between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. Governors noted that the Academy's was ranked 5th out of the fifteen maintained secondary schools in Southwark. The Executive Principal added that this placed the Academy in the top 10% of schools nationally for CVA.

Staffing

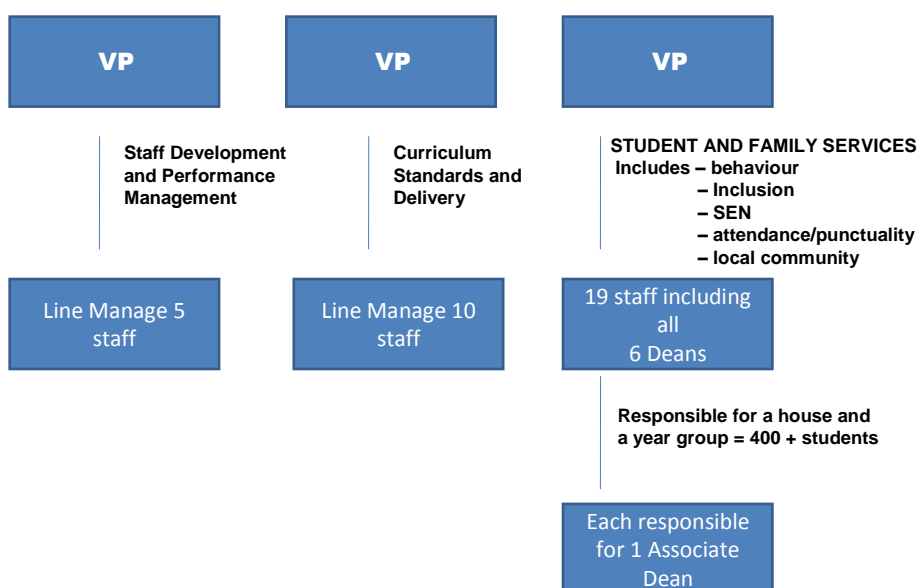
The Executive Principal reported that the most significant issue to be resolved upon taking up her post was that of the restructuring of the Deans' posts. Given the situation it was felt that the proposed move would only serve to destabilise the senior team. Therefore the restructuring had been formally withdrawn. However, some organisational changes were needed and these were outlined in a presentation given by the Executive Principal.

The presentation covered the following:

CONTEXT

- Pastoral Structure – backbone to any academy in challenging circumstances
- Need to have clear, simple structure in place understood by both staff and students
- Need to recognise barriers to learning and to have agreed strategies for support
 - Behaviour
 - Attendance punctuality
 - SEN – learning needs
 - Outside factors which impacts on the lives of our young people
- Need to recognise the shift in recent years to the rigorous monitoring of student progress against base line data and a measurement of our success is the impact we have on identified groups e.g. looked after children, EAL, SEN, travellers.

CURRENT STRUCTURE



ISSUES WITH CURRENT SYSTEM

- Too many students for effective monitoring of student progress
- Staff complain system is complex and cumbersome
- No career progression
- Too much pastoral work for Deans
- Role of Associate Deans unclear and has little resemblance to Job Description in most cases
- Falling rolls
- No capacity to support Vice Principals
- Vice Principals 1&2 in danger of disengagement with students and teaching and learning
- Base line data – comparison across whole cohort

Advantages of House System

Inter House activities and competitions

PROPOSED STRUCTURE



HOUSE STRUCTURE

7S	7S	7A	7A	7E	7E	7R	7R	YEAR 7
8S	8S	8A	8A	8E	8E	8R	8R	YEAR 8
9S	9S	9A	9A	9E	9E	9R	9R	YEAR 9
10S	10S	10A	10A	10E	10E	10R	10R	YEAR 10
11S	11S	11A	11A	11E	11E	11R	11R	YEAR 11

FOR DISCUSSION

YEAR 12
YEAR 13

S = Sapphire
A = Amber
E = Emerald
R = Ruby

These house names were chosen at random. New names could be adopted. Involvement of Year 12/13 needs discussion.

Governors expressed their support for the proposed structure and approved it.

Premises

Two health and safety audits have been carried out: one by the union representatives and one by an independent company. In consultation with the Chair the following works have been carried out: refurbishment of the 6th form areas; the fitting of additional CCTV cameras to cover the blind spots; and signs for the girls' toilets encouraging the students to keep them clean. Some £14k has been spent of the 6th form area which was not fit for purpose. To make the reception area more welcoming fresh flowers are brought in each week and chairs have been purchased.

A canopy and additional seating were installed outside at half term as per the development plan.

Budget

Expenditure at the end of February was in line with expectations and represented 41% of the budget.

Priorities and Issues this Term

The Executive Principal reported that since her arrival in January she had operated an open door policy for both staff and students and this had proved useful in helping gauge the priorities. The Executive Principal also reported that she had spent time with a number of parents and established some very positive relationships.

During the first half term there was a focus on uniform which was now much improved but needs constant reinforcement. The Executive Principal also

reported that she had asked the Interim Vice Principal, Steven Davidson, to look at attendance and punctuality. Mr Davidson had earlier in the meeting given a presentation on attendance and had handed out the following papers:

- Attendance Report for Governors March 2009
- Attendance Data
- Summary of Biometric Registration Costs Provided by 3 Companies

During his presentation Mr Davidson reported that attendance for Year 7 was above the national average but overall it was below the national average and below the average for academies. Mr Davidson outlined the strategies being used to improve attendance and punctuality. These included the implementation of a rewards system for good and improved attendance. The Academy was working with Southwark Education Welfare and Attendance Service (EWAS) to improve attendance.

Mr Davidson reported that the introduction of an automatic registration system should help to improve attendance. He explained that the value of automatic registration was that it places the responsibility for attendance on the students. As with the canteen and library provision, a scan of a student's finger was automatically recognised. A student was registered as present or not according to whether they have had their finger scanned. In some schools with poor attendance this system has improved attendance by as much as 2.5%. The system also speeded up the production of reports on daily attendance which freed up attendance officers to follow up absences rather than spending time inputting data.

Governors supported the purchase of an automatic registration system and considered the bids from three companies as set out in the paper before them. It was agreed that the LiveRegister system best met the requirements of the Academy.

The Executive Principal continued her report by explaining that the priorities for this half term had been:

- Behaviour
- SEN/Inclusion
- Staff Conference

Communications

Letter posted to parents/carers to keep them informed of developments have been very positively received. The introduction of a weekly bulletin has helped to keep staff informed of events. A termly newsletter will be posted to parents at the end of each term.

Homework

Many parents had reported concerns about homework. The particular issue was that students were not allowed to take their books home. Therefore homework books have been purchased for all students in Years

7, 8 and 9 for each subject.

Events

On 19th February the BBC's Question Time programme was filmed at the Academy. Some of the Academy's students participated and the filming was successful.

Also in February students took part in the production of High School Musical. There were two evening performances held on Tuesday and Thursday and two matinee performances in which primary school children were invited to. The production was very enjoyable and well attended by staff and parents.

A list of other events was also given in the report and noted by governors.

The Executive Principal concluded her report by providing statistical information on exclusions; number on roll; overall attendance; racist incidents; and bullying incidents.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Principal for her report.

Resolved

- (1) That the Principal's report be received with thanks.**
- (2) That the proposed change to the pastoral structure from September 2009 be approved.**
- (3) That the purchase of the LiveRegister automatic registration system be approved.**

7. Committee Minutes

The draft minutes of this term's committee meetings had been sent to governors prior to the meeting.

The committee minutes were presented to the Governing Body as an efficient way of formally reporting on the work of committees.

The Chairman asked if there were any question on the minutes. There were no questions.

Resolved -

**That the draft minutes of the following meetings be received:
Personnel Committee on 21 January 2009;
Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee on 4 February 2009;
Finance & General Purposes Committee on 11 March 2009.**

8. Dates and Time of Future Next Meeting

Governors confirmed the dates and times for future meetings.

Resolved –

That the dates and times of future meetings be as follows:

Summer Term 2009

Personnel	13/05/09	09:00
Curric & Academic St	20/05/09	09:00
Finance & GP	10/06/09	09:00
Governing Body	01/07/09	18:30

9. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

PART II CONFIDENTIAL

There was no confidential business.

Chair _____ **Date** _____